

HANDBOOK TO THE  
CONTROVERSY  
WITH ROME

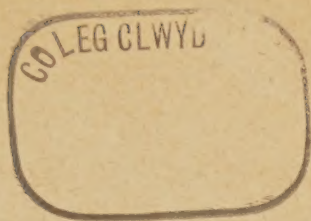
KARL VON HASE







LINCOLN BIBLE INSTITUTE









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Handbook

The Controversy with Rome







Handbook

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The Controversy with Rome

KARL VON HASE

Handbook

to

The Controversy with Rome

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IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

SECOND EDITION, REVISED

WITH ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND EDITION

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THE RELIGIOUS TRUST SOCIETY

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The Controversy with Rome



*Handbook*

to

*The Controversy with Rome*

BY

KARL VON HASE

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VOLUME II

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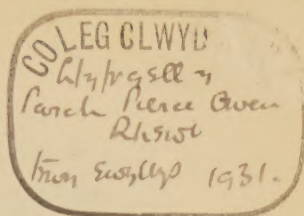
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BOOK II  
SALVATION







## CHAPTER I

### FAITH AND WORKS

THE moral corruption of the Church at the close of the fifteenth century had not alienated men from the Church. On the basis of the common belief that heaven must be deserved, the idea arose that pious works, i. e. works done in the spirit, or for the profit, of the Church, even apart from the disposition out of which they arose, lay the foundation of such merit; that they can be even done by others for us, it may be in consideration of payment; or that in lieu of the works which strict duty demanded, or of penance inflicted, a pardon may be bought. There was a time when the Church contended against this misleading view. An Anglo-Saxon Council at Clofesho (in 747) mentions a rich man who not long before required prompt absolution for a very infamous deed, while he claimed that he had caused so many persons to sing Psalms and fast on his behalf that, even were he to live for three hundred years longer, sufficient satisfaction had been made for him. The Council remarks upon this that, if the rich could thus propitiate the Divine justice by means of others, how is it that Christ has said that it is hard for the rich to enter into the kingdom of heaven? <sup>1</sup> But the clergy, and particularly the Papacy, succumbed to the temptation to become rich through the sins of the faithful. Thus the Church appeared to be, as Simon Magus had

<sup>1</sup> Mark x. 23 f.; Luke xviii. 24.



thought it to be<sup>1</sup>, a magician's shop, which sold the Holy Spirit and heaven for money, for magnificent institutions, and, to take the most innocent cases, in consideration of all sorts of external privations and undertakings.

When Luther, in the deep earnestness of his monasticism, felt that the grace of God cannot be merited by all these self-inflictions, and, indignant that remission of sins should be proclaimed in the market as to be had for money, was seized with anguish at the thought that this degeneracy of the Church was robbing his people of eternal salvation; then, for the confidence which arose in his heart that faith alone saves without works, he found confirmation in the great Apostle and in the Church Father who was congenial to him in spirit<sup>2</sup>.

What St. Paul declared in opposition to the adherence of Christianity to Judaism, that faith justifies without the deeds of the Law, Luther applied to the works included in the system of the Papal Church, so far as they are not the sincere expression of a pious disposition, but merely performed as external actions in order to merit the favour of God.

Freedom has also been a characteristic of the Gospel, which has raised that gift of nature, so far as it has dedicated itself to God's kingdom, to be a gift of grace. The Church in the time of the martyrs therefore joyfully carried on its work with the aid of this spiritual treasure without distinguishing much between what man can do by virtue of his inherent strength as implanted by God, and what he can do through God's new supernatural grace. But when

<sup>1</sup> Acts viii. 19 ff.

<sup>2</sup> St. Augustine. See vol. i. p. 32.



Pelagius<sup>1</sup>, estimating the value of the two separately, maintained that man, through the freedom implanted in him to fulfil God's commands, has in this way the power to merit a certain degree of blessedness, St. Augustine, carrying still further that pious bent of mind which had long led him to pray, 'Lord, give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt,' and adding emphasis to a traditional view of the deadly consequences of man's first fall, opposed to him the dogma of *original sin*. According to this doctrine, through Adam's fall there has come upon all his descendants permanent guilt and a total impotence for good, which can only be removed by supernatural grace. Moreover, he did not shrink from the consequence. If all of Adam's race were born with freedom thus restrained, it is only the will of God in His eternal pre-determination which resolved to save one portion of mankind through His grace in Christ, and to deliver the rest to their ruin; in other words, unconditional predestination. Pelagius in his endeavours, pre-eminently moral in their aim, to inspire fresh courage for the fulfilment of God's commands, did not intend to injure Christian interests by asserting unstinted moral freedom, which he thought of as a Divine gift by which to merit the grace of God—the only support for the Christian in obtaining a higher degree of blessedness in the kingdom of God. St. Augustine appealed to St. Paul. That through Adam death with sin is come upon all<sup>2</sup> he understood to refer to moral death, eternal apart from Christ, and held that man has as

<sup>1</sup> Said to have been a British monk named Morgan (of which 'Pelagius', 'sea-born', is a Latin translation). He lived chiefly in Rome and Africa; d. circ. 420.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. v. 12.



little right to argue with his Maker as the clay with its potter, who with the same unlimited power makes from the same lump one vessel to honour and another to dishonour<sup>1</sup>. He won over the Church by showing that if she entered on the path of Pelagius, through the admission that man can fall back upon his own strength, she is inevitably constrained to go further, and must renounce her claim to being absolutely necessary for salvation. The Roman bishop Zosimus<sup>2</sup>, appealed to by both parties, at first declared the whole dispute to be an unprofitable quarrel on the part of inquisitive minds, going beyond what is written; but after being induced to look into its doctrinal significance, following the precedent of African Councils, he condemned the Pelagians (418). St. Augustine's dogma prevailed in the whole of the West as the orthodox doctrine, to which also the Greek Church assented by condemning Pelagius at the ecumenical Council of Ephesus (431), although without a real comprehension of, or interest in, the matter.

But religious sentiment revolted against an irrevocable assignment of a portion of the human race to eternal torment; the moral consciousness against a permanent state of guilt arising out of another's sin committed in time immemorial; the needs of everyday life against the futility of all inherent moral energy. Therefore before St. Augustine's death there arose an accommodation, called by his disciples the dregs of Pelagius, and later *semi-Pelagianism*. It represents as necessary for salvation a continuous working of freedom and grace side by side, affected by the diseased condition of all the higher powers of the spirit by reason of

<sup>1</sup> Rom. ix. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Bp. of Rome, 417-8.



Adam's fall. It was reckoned immaterial whether God's grace or man's freedom took the initiative, whether Saul against his will<sup>1</sup> was forced over to Christ, or whether the malefactor<sup>2</sup> grasped the pierced rescuing hand of the Saviour. This compromise is much nearer to Pelagius than to St. Augustine; for the former undoubtedly recognized no freedom which was not bestowed and assisted by God's grace. Individual semi-Pelagians were condemned as Pelagians, and it was only because others willingly submitted themselves to the judgement of the Church that it came to be said, that there was no heresy of semi-Pelagianism. There is in fact none, inasmuch as after many fluctuations it obtained dominance in the Roman Church, and has always prevailed in the Eastern Church. But Pelagius passed for a heretic; while Augustine not only counted as a saint, but, with the depth of thought and loftiness of flight which characterized his piety, he enjoyed unbounded appreciation, and swayed the collective theology of the Middle Ages. On this account people did not venture openly to gainsay his favourite dogmas. Rather did Pelagian ideas frequently veil themselves unconsciously in an Augustinian dress.

The great Pauline conception of saving faith as devoted reliance on the favour of God in Christ had, under the action of the Church itself, been early modified to the conception of the *Catholic* faith, in the sense of orthodoxy, i.e. the unconditional acceptance of all the doctrines of the faith as laid down by the Church, so that the very conception which was framed in the first instance to deliver men's minds from the Jewish law, on the contrary now cast those minds into fresh fetters. While the doctrines of the Church's

<sup>1</sup> Acts ix. 3 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxiii. 42.



faith received a copious and subtle development, a precise knowledge of them was not to be required from the ordinary Christian. Therefore it was already regarded as sufficient to give a general adhesion to all the Church's decrees even without a definite acquaintance with them (*fides implicita*). To this the nickname of 'charcoal-burner's faith' has been attached, in accordance with the legend that the devil asked a charcoal-burner what in fact was his private belief? He replied, 'I believe what the Church believes.' 'But what then does the Church believe?' 'The Church believes what I believe.' In this way the devil has to withdraw without attaining his object. Since this bare taking for granted, or mere readiness to take for granted, was possible almost without any Christian principles—and this faith which bows not to the force of truth, but only to that of the Church, is compatible with an immoral course of life, with religious indifference, nay, with unbelief—the Church required as a second ingredient of inherent Christianity the proof of faith by means of pious works, and ascribed to these a certain merit, and a still greater one to exaggerated renunciations. The denial, according to St. Augustine, that man possesses any inherent strength, since what God rewards in us are only His own gifts, was not favourable to such works and merits.

It is the way of a hierarchy to extend their requirements over all relationships in life, so as at once to accustom the faithful to an external power controlling them on every side. The non-recognition of these requirements is in general more severely censured than the neglect of ordinary moral duties, and these latter are less highly esteemed than zealously to carry out or transcend what is recommended by the hier-



archy. Such are a definite round of prayers, fasts, pilgrimages, crusades, church-building, up to monastic vows and deeds of spiritual chivalry. Thus there came into existence the conception termed, in accordance with its etymological and original idea, *opus operatum*, the work performed in virtue of a command or advice on the part of the Church, which simply from being done has a value in itself in the sight of the Church and of God. The Church of the Middle Ages has indeed accomplished great deeds by means of this ; but in it there was found the way to divorce from Christian principles the Church's work, as had already been done to the Church's faith.

Scholasticism, as being the Church's mediaeval theology and so falling into the errors of that epoch, yet always held fast to the banner of Christ, the Cross, being in a strait between its reverence for St. Augustine and for the 'philosopher'—for in place of Pelagius, Aristotle<sup>1</sup> had stepped in as representative of human wisdom. It followed the compromise between grace and freedom, while it brought about a mutual systematizing and enhancing of both, giving more emphasis sometimes to the Divine, sometimes to the human, ever in accordance with the tone of mind of the individual teacher. According to this it is only the supernatural gifts, bestowed upon Adam for life in Paradise, which were lost through his Fall. What is purely human is left, although in some measure impaired, and also moral freedom. Hence this does not avail for justification before God. But prevenient grace is bestowed upon all in Baptism. Free will can resist it, or willingly accept it. By means of the faithful use of it there is acquired a merit, since it comes

<sup>1</sup> The most famous and influential of Greek philosophers, and founder of the Peripatetic school ; d. 322 B. C.



so easily, and in accordance with God's promise (*de congruo*). Upon this merit God bestows a higher grace, and again through its faithful use there is acquired a merit as of desert (*de condigno*), to which, following upon works and repentance in the Church militant, eternal happiness is promised. This justification before God is therefore at the same time sanctification, while through grace fresh and higher powers are infused, by means of which the man becomes actually righteous; an abiding condition, capable of increase and of diminution, also of being lost. An unconditional predestination to condemnation, at least in the case of Christians, is non-existent, for free will chooses for itself its eternal destiny. We may venture to doubt whether the transition of a sinful race to the salvation of the redeemed, mysterious and manifold in individual detail as is that transition, is set forth with full precision by means of these definitions; but it must be admitted that even in a Church which took the above view a Christian faith and life were possible. But there was also room found for the debased tenet that mere orthodoxy, with the carrying out of works altogether external, merits heaven, and payment for indulgences buys off the torments of the existence beyond the grave.

Deliverance from this corruption of the Church Luther saw to lie in the recognition of the universal corruption of mankind from time immemorial; so that every human interference in matters of eternal salvation was denied, and all made to depend upon the grace of God. This corresponded to his deep sense of man's degradation and God's omnipotence. Hence the revival of the Augustinian conception of original sin, for it is only if mankind since the Fall is absolutely powerless to do anything for its own deliver-



ance, that Christ has not died in vain, and only thus does the believer become sure of salvation which is not dependent upon his own impotence. Justification before God takes place inasmuch as faith lays hold upon Christ, by means of whose imputed merits God regards the sinner as righteous, although he is as yet by no means such. But the moment of justification is held to be followed also by gradual sanctification with its good works, while the latter is to be clearly distinguished from the former, seeing that it is attained through Divine grace, but also through the free strength of man, awakened and set at liberty by it, and now for the first time co-operating with it. For justifying faith is solely the work of God's grace. This was the common conviction of the Protestantism of the Reformation.

But such a saving faith is not a simple taking for granted of certain traditions, but has its origin in alarm of conscience. It consists of the unconditional surrender of the heart—in the sense of utter helplessness—to Him Who was crucified for us and rose again, so that the believer, whose existence and desire is no longer for himself, is regarded by God as having his sinfulness covered over by Christ's merits. If in this way works come to be altogether excluded from the attainment of salvation, nevertheless Luther always recognized that they necessarily and naturally arise from faith, as often as opportunity offers itself; not works capriciously devised by an excited fancy or a greedy hierarchy, but truly pious ones suggested by our conscience and its remembrancer, the table of the ten Commandments, ordained by God. His opposition between faith and works is nothing more than an exaltation of the personality as a whole, new-born in Christ, above the



individual deeds in which it is expressed. He explains this by a simple Biblical illustration from nature: good and pious works by no means make a good and pious man, but a good and pious man good and pious works. Evil works by no means make an evil man, but an evil man does evil works. So that in every case the person must first be good and pious, as a preliminary to all good works, and good works come from the good and pious person. In like manner Christ says: 'An evil tree bears no good fruits; a good tree bears no evil fruits.'<sup>1</sup> Now it is plain that fruits do not bear the tree; so too the trees do not grow upon the fruits. As then the trees must be first, and afterwards the fruits, and the fruits make the trees neither good nor evil, but the trees the fruits; so must the man in his own person first be pious or evil, before he does good or evil works.

As according to this the Reformation Church denied that good works are necessary to salvation, so, as opinions worked themselves up in the excitement of the contest, a slighting of Christian activities might thereby come to take the place of justification by works. Thus Amsdorf<sup>2</sup> wrote: 'The proposition that good works are injurious to salvation is a right Christian proposition, preached by St. Paul and Luther.' The aged, expelled bishop of Naumburg, a faithful soul, but a narrow-minded zealot, was thinking of the works that were in vogue at that time by way of expiation of sin, and of the extent to which even good works might induce to pride at one's own merit. The Formula of

<sup>1</sup> See Matt. vii. 18; Luke vi. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Nikolaus von Amsdorf, a German reformer, and intimate friend of Luther, by whom he was consecrated 'bishop' of Naumburg in 1542, a proceeding which naturally gave rise to much contention. He was subsequently expelled from office.



Concord<sup>1</sup> gently corrected Luther's confidential friend with his quixotic ways. Nevertheless Staupitz<sup>2</sup>, a man possessed of genuine Catholic piety, had written: 'Many build upon their works, their fasting, prayers, almsgiving. It would be better that a man should die before he knew what good works were, than that he should place his sole confidence in his good works and build upon his righteousness.'

Alongside of that which was held to be of account in popular Catholic life, viz. orthodoxy and justification by works, scholasticism, in the memory of those gentle words in the Gospel, 'her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much,'<sup>3</sup> has yet left behind it another doctrine of deeper import. This is that the faith (*fides formata*), which carries with it love as a quickening principle (*forma*), is therefore active in love, and leads to salvation. Luther moreover rejected this faith, 'which encloses love within it,' as the twaddle of papists and sophists. The Church of the Reformation rejected it on the ground that it is impossible to love God above all things, or indeed to love Him at all, so long as there rests upon us the sense of God's wrath, which is not overcome till we lay hold upon the merits of Christ, and so have faith. Besides, according to the scholastic view, love as being in its essence free would be the inherent co-operating power, and yet poured in like a love potion.

The Reformers, it is true, had not on their side the

<sup>1</sup> Otherwise called the Book of Berg from the monastery of that name at Magdeburg where it was drawn up, and issued in 1577 by eminent theologians for the purpose of obtaining a formula which should be generally accepted by Reformers. To a large extent it fulfilled its aim.

<sup>2</sup> Professor of theology in the University of Wittenberg, 1502-20. He has been called the spiritual father of Luther, whose protest soon became too violent for him. He died as Benedictine abbot at Salzburg in 1524.

<sup>3</sup> Luke vii. 47.



traditional teaching, but they had the exalted reputation of St. Augustine, and along with him what had never ceased to be the regulation orthodox view, as well as weighty sayings of St. Paul, with which they harassed the Romish theologians, as persons who with their works of merit and their free will set forth Pelagian and pagan doctrine. St. Augustine had taught the complete helplessness of man, in order that he might surrender himself unconditionally to the Church ; Luther taught the same, only in order to cast him helpless before the Cross at the throne of the Triune God. Therefore the Council of Trent in their long deliberation and debate found themselves face to face with the problem how, while dropping the most objectionable features of what had hitherto held good, setting aside the eccentricities of the Reformers' teaching, and harmonizing as far as possible the scholastic tradition with the pithy sayings of St. Paul, they should defend a series of their institutions, which could not be placed on a secure footing without the meritorious character of pious deeds. Accordingly Pelagian tenets, it is true, were disclaimed, but in recognizing a freedom, weakened yet not lost, and in condemning Luther's well-known favourite expressions in opposition to it, there is accepted a Divine and human co-operation, according to the scholastic presumption that they both work one into the other and thus grow ; while faith is the commencement and basis of justification, coming into existence through the moving power of God's grace. But by faith they intend only the general taking for granted of Church dogmas, an act which can still exist side by side with mortal sin, and thus does not suffice for salvation. Justification is the forgiveness of sins and holiness, inasmuch as by means of actual participation



in the merits of Christ faith and love are infused. These are imparted of grace (inasmuch as preceding good works only establish merit *de congruo*), but as an abiding condition enhanced by the merit of good works done in accordance with the command of God and the Church, by means of which the justified person, all the time supported by grace, has to furnish satisfaction for the temporal punishment of his sins and to merit eternal life.

This teaching is semi-Pelagian, approaching the pious Pelagius more nearly than St. Augustine. More than once witnesses of credit from the midst of the Catholic Church have pointed out this objection. Such in the Middle Ages was the deeply thoughtful Bradwardine<sup>1</sup>, archbishop elect<sup>2</sup> of Canterbury, who indicted the whole Catholic world before God's judgement seat for running after Pelagius. Such in post-Reformation times were the Jansenists<sup>3</sup>, who rose up primarily against the worldly-wise light-minded morality of the Jesuits with the gloomy earnestness of the Augustinian dogma, and were overthrown by peremptory sentences on the part of royal and papal authorities. Nevertheless it is not to be maintained that the teaching of Trent desired in an unchristian manner to take anything away from the honour of Christ, if it does not go so far as recognize the imputation of His merits as the sole ground of justification—a position which Bellarmine has advanced to a complete denial of that ground. Also it is precisely

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Bradwardine, 'Doctor Profundus,' eminent as a theologian and mathematician; died in the year of his appointment to Canterbury, 1349.

<sup>2</sup> Bradwardine was actually archbishop of Canterbury, though only for a few weeks (July 19—Aug. 26).

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 149.



owing to him that the obscurity in the Tridentine teaching has become undeniable with regard to the things that prepare for, and the things that are the causes of, justification, inasmuch as what Trent describes as preparing the way, such as free turning towards God, belief in redemption through Christ, hatred towards sin, intention to lead a new life, and incipient love to God, he reckons as causes, among others faith, love, and the purpose of fulfilling all commands of God. What then remains yet higher on the human side? Unless forsooth external works are to be reckoned as this higher thing! How clear and simple, on the other hand, is the reformed teaching, which for justification, as bestowed by God's grace, only demands on man's side, sorrow for sin and belief in redemption through Christ, in other words, grief and joy. To these there is to be added as a verifying result, in proportion, be it understood, with the ability given in each case, a new life characterized by holiness. Thus the reformed teaching as to justification presents itself as the outpouring of one heart, the religion of the Gospel of redemption, as the act of a pious faith on the part of both hero and people. The Roman dogma, on the other hand, the religion belonging to a new law, formulated with calculating deliberation, which desires to guard itself on every side, has an air of being the work of diplomatic conferences.

Notwithstanding, the antagonism between the two theories is not so unqualified, as it appeared in the turmoil of that spiritual conflict. If Catholic theology does not hold faith to be in itself sufficient, this is so because it set up a narrower conception of faith, just as St. James understood it in a narrower sense than St. Paul, and undeniably there are presented to us in



Holy Scripture different, although related, meanings. Again, if by the Reformers justification was only defined as an external judicial act on the part of God, by which as yet nothing in the man himself is altered, this was done in order to avoid his appearing himself to contribute to the decisive transformation. But the greater the power of faith is considered to be, the greater too must be the alteration which it produces in the man. The feeling first of rejection in the sight of God in the midst of the terrors of conscience, and then of the full grace of God by the imputation of the merits of Christ—the difference viewed from this standpoint is indeed the difference between hell and heaven; so that the whole severance between justification and holiness appears only after all to be a mental contemplation of isolated elements existing in unison in the fullness of the Christian life. Therefore, while abiding by this general teaching, just as in Luther's own case we often find an overstepping of the limits of his dogma, a section of the Reformers maintained that Christ's righteousness, instead of being simply imputed for the covering of our sins, is actually imparted to the faithful. This gliding of justification into sanctification was at that time rejected as Pelagian and popish, but has always remained characteristic of Protestant mysticism.

Protestantism considers good works not to be necessary for salvation. Catholicism declares them to be necessary. But just as the former nevertheless holds them to be the necessary consequence and attestation of faith as often as opportunity for them presents itself, and just as Luther reckons faith and works inseparable, and the Formula of Concord<sup>1</sup>, with the support of St. Paul, promises them a reward in

<sup>1</sup> See p. 13.



heaven, so too the Catholic surrenders their necessity, where this opportunity fails. If reforming Protestantism rejected any individual co-operation and any necessity of good works for justification, on the other hand it recognizes in the justified a ready co-operation for the constant increase of holiness through the strength newly infused or merely liberated by the action of the Holy Spirit, along with the inclination towards good works, which looks not unlike the Catholic requirement of individual activity subsequent to the first prevenient grace. If the Reformation also rejected the scholastic doctrinal conception of *fides formata*<sup>1</sup>, yet it did not dispute that the right sort of living faith cannot be separated from the love of God, or, more precisely, begets love from itself; but then it also virtually carries it already in an undeveloped form; and so there presents itself a reformed conception of saving faith, which appears not so very unlike that scholastic conception.

Therefore, however decidedly justification by faith *alone* (*fide sola*) was the banner of Reformation Protestantism, so 'that in this article is contained the whole of our teaching and life as opposed to Pope, devil, and the world'<sup>2</sup>, just as Luther also held, 'if this doctrine perishes, it is all over with us'; nevertheless the discussion upon religion at Ratisbon in 1541 between Eck and Melancthon—this last attempt at reconciliation on the part of the Churches which were falling apart under the wings of the imperial eagle—attained to a theoretical agreement on the fundamental article in controversy<sup>3</sup>. With regard to justification they said

<sup>1</sup> See p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> *Art. Smalc.* p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> It was called the Ratisbon (Regensburg) Interim, a provisional arrangement devised by the Emperor Charles V for settling the points in dispute, and was held during the Diet in that city.



thus: 'It is a settled and wholesome doctrine that a sinful man is justified by *living* and *active* (*efficacem*) faith, for by means of this we are for Christ's sake acceptable and well-pleasing to God.' Luther indeed termed this the wretched botched production of a notary. His suspicion in reference to the whole of this mediation in the interests of peace was justified, in that the opposing parties were yet far from deducing from this doctrine of justification the consequences which Protestantism drew from it. In fact, inherent in every approximation of view there still lay discord unreconciled in the shape of the assertion of the Reformers that the natural man was *impotent*, and that saving faith was an *internal* thing.

Möhlér applied the first and brilliant portion of his *Symbolik* to showing the terrible consequences of that doctrine of absence of freedom, the offspring of gloomy fanaticism. But Protestantism is not so hard pressed that it is compelled to defend, as though an eternal truth, every phase of belief that it has passed through. It is its rightful privilege openly to confess a well-intentioned error of its earlier time. We have now to show how the Reformers came to their belief. In opposing the dead works of the Church's belief in those days, the seductive arts of indulgences and the arbitrariness of the hierarchy, they found support in the doctrine of the absolute religious helplessness of the natural man, in order that henceforward he may live solely by God's grace, inasmuch as they thought that man could never be too much humbled and that too much honour could never be ascribed to the Lord. In arguing thus, they had the courage like St. Augustine to deduce the consequence as well, viz. unqualified predestination. Therefore indeed God also appears,



at any rate subsequent to the Fall, as the cause of evil, only that for Him it is not evil, for He is not subject to law. It is God alone Who from all eternity has destined a man to good or to evil without any possibility of his exercising his own will otherwise. Luther, representing to his own imagination all hostile powers with whom he was bound to maintain the great conflict under the persons of Satan and the Pope, occasionally conceived the matter thus : God and Satan are contending for the man, who is placed between the two like an animal to be ridden. If God places Himself upon him his will and his progress are in the direction that God wills ; if Satan rides him, it is whither *he* wills, straight to hell. In the teaching as to predestination there lay, irrespective of its religious grounds, a certain attraction for the contentions of the Reformers, whereby at the same time it became clear that that doctrine appertained to a long series of ancestors of the Reformers before the Reformation. If the Church consists of those only who are predestined to salvation, then no external status is any proof of belonging to her, and if God has written any one in the Book of Life, no curse of the Pope can erase his name. The recognition of unlimited dependence upon God was freedom in the sight of men. Nevertheless the lack of freedom in mankind where their highest interests were concerned presented a sharp antagonism to that freedom of spirit which is characteristic of Protestantism, and which produced so much ferment among the masses in the first decades of the founding of its Church. Above all, enlightened men like Erasmus<sup>1</sup> were estranged by it from the Reformation. Also it was far removed from the intelligence of common folk, and the emperor

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 71.



Charles calls it a doctrine befitting cattle rather than men.

Melanchthon at first agreed with Luther. In fact he outdid him by means of the assertion that *everything* is the result of eternal necessity, according as God's will has ordained it. Afterwards, on account of moral considerations, he reached the conviction that the grace of God in Christ is offered to *all*. Therefore it is in *ourselves* that the reason lies 'why Saul is rejected, and David accepted'. This means the recognition of a free will that has not been lost, and in conflict with inherent weakness can admit God's grace or close the door against it. Luther took no notice of this, while he angrily disclaimed the softening down of another favourite dogma. It was not till after his death that his school (not his Church) rebuked the still modest semi-Pelagianism of the school of Melanchthon as 'Synergism'. Flacius<sup>1</sup>, however, advanced what in Luther's mouth was merely an expression of feeling, to an assertion that original sin has become man's substance, so that after the Fall he is in truth nothing else than sin. Through Calvin's influence unqualified predestination was become the watchword of reformed theology. Thereupon the Formula of Concord<sup>2</sup>, as the last symbolic representation of Lutheranism, in one part indeed ascribed to man subsequently to the Fall merely the capacity to resist God—resembling a stone, a log, a pillar of salt—in matters spiritual or affecting God; in another claimed God's grace for all in such a way that it rests with each individual to allow it to work upon

<sup>1</sup> Matthias Flacius (Latinized from Vlacich), a pupil of Luther at Wittenberg, afterwards a professor at Jena; d. 1575.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 13.



him, or to close the door to it. But what is this but freedom? An accommodation between the two contradictory statements was not so much as attempted.

This was in itself a reason why sooner or later Protestantism had to accept such development as to recognize in the individual even the spirit of freedom which is its own essence as created by God, and, although inheriting sinful inclinations, yet possessing freedom as its birthright, i.e. the germ of strength to make itself free. It may be openly avowed that the semi-Pelagian tendency of Catholic dogma approaches more nearly to the Protestant consciousness as it at present prevails than does that of the Reformers in its gloomy majesty. Hence it has resulted that Protestant theologians of our day, and such as considered themselves to be supporters of pure Lutheranism, defined as saving faith precisely that which works by love, exactly in accordance with the scholastic conception of *fides formata*, and placed it in contrast with a presumed Catholic dogma, 'justification by means of good works.' In fact it has happened that a theologian, who in the course of a most zealous conflict as to faith had become steadily more Lutheran, at length, enticed by St. James's Epistle, held it to be just as correct to say 'works save' as 'faith saves'.

Möhlér with his ready perception of everything great, where the dogmatic teaching of his Church does not compel him to misconstrue it, here also recognizes Luther's religious greatness, while he finds in him an absence of moral grandeur, and thus he reaches the conclusion 'that in Protestantism the religious element is the brighter side, the moral the more gloomy one; and from this it follows that in the end even the



religious side itself could only be grasped in a warped and distorted form'.<sup>1</sup>

We should, however, at once be led to look with suspicion upon such a reproach by the fact that it was Luther's moral revolt against the misleading of the people by the traffic in indulgences which first summoned him from the silent cell to the spiritual battlefield; that in some Protestant nations stern morality reached the height of a Puritanism which held even the innocent joys of the world and of intellectual culture to be sinful; nay, that Protestantism itself introduced reform into the loose morality of the clericals in Rome, as even Erasmus in his time found them. The whole objection is based upon the fact that Luther desires to hold the *religious* standpoint as being the evangelical one, strictly distinguished from the *legal*, which no longer concerns him who is set free by means of Christ. But Möhler takes the legal as bound up with the moral, while, on the other hand, for Luther the purest morality is included in the Gospel as well, only no longer arising from fear of the terrors of the law.

Certainly the doctrine that man born in a state of permanent guilt, and altogether impotent for good, must submit to God's grace the decision whether in accordance with its eternal decree it desires to reclaim him or not, may be perverted into bolstering up indolence and enticing towards pleasure. Even St. Augustine in his time perceived that absolute predestination must be proclaimed to the world as though it were not absolute. We should notice, however, that this system of doctrine rests upon the deep religious basis of complete submission to God's will.

<sup>1</sup> *Symb.* p. 240. [H.]



Man desires to receive everlasting blessings, quite palpably from the grace of God, not merely through the creation but once again through redemption, and with the total surrender of himself to render thanks for it all to Christ alone. Moreover, in the relationship between religion and morality as sprung from the same root, there is to be found a preservative against both levity and despair. Only the man who knows that he is already on the right road can deem himself predestinated to eternal life, and he who is troubled upon the point, and so longs earnestly after God's grace, bears in this very fact tokens of hope that he does not belong to those who have been from all eternity rejected. St. Augustine, at the time when he believed in the freedom of his own moral will, stole pears, led a thoughtful life in the circle of *Eversores*<sup>1</sup>, in league with heretics strove after empty honours, and cost his pious mother many tears. When he desired to know nothing more of inherent, uncontrolled strength, he became a saint, his life ruled by strict morality, and from him there came forth a stream of religious life in its moral power, which, after refreshing the whole of the Middle Ages, poured itself with fructifying effect into the Protestant Church. But against Luther's view his own words are held to furnish adequate testimony.

Möhler had too much of historical sense and of frankness to hold the distinguished heresiarch to one uncouth saying or another, alien to our age and habits, such as still reminds us of the son of Thuringian peasants<sup>2</sup> or of the dirt of the mendicant friar. But it interested him, if he read the writings of the

<sup>1</sup> A body of persons who may be compared to the 'Mohawks' of later days.

<sup>2</sup> Luther's father was a miner in the Mansfeld district (Prussian Saxony) with its smelting furnaces.



Reformers, to see how 'they cherished the view that there was something excessively dangerous in being really good; in fact, that this principle of holiness, as soon as it is about to take complete possession of a man, contains the germ of its own destruction, inasmuch as such a person must of necessity become presumptuous, sink into vainglory, and seek to rival the Eternal One Himself in Divine majesty. On this account the safety of the faithful requires that they should evermore maintain a fair-sized nucleus of evil within them'. He considers that this has found expression in language of much beauty and success, in point of form as well as full of ingenuousness, in the following passage from Luther's *Table Talk*: 'Doctor Jonas said to Doctor Luther at supper that he had that day in his lecture dealt with the saying of St. Paul to Timothy: "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,"<sup>1</sup> and said: "Ah! how nobly St. Paul speaks of his death! I cannot have the faith that he had." Thereupon said Doctor Martin: "I believe that St. Paul himself was not able to believe it as stoutly as he puts it there. Certainly I too unfortunately cannot believe it as stoutly as I can preach and speak and write of it, or as other people probably suppose that I can. And it would scarcely be a good thing that we should do the whole of what God commands, for He would lose His Godhead, and would moreover become a liar, and could not abide true. Also St. Paul's statement to the Romans would be overthrown, where he says: 'God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.'"<sup>2</sup>

The one thing which surprises us here is the contrast between that which a worthy man in a state of spiritual

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xi. 32.



exaltation perceives as ideal truth, and the weird shadows which in an hour of debility the intellect and sense cast over it. Luther from time to time experienced and expressed this in a still stronger form. His faithful Mathesius<sup>1</sup> relates of him: 'At one time a woman complains to him that she could never believe at all. "Can you still repeat your nursery belief?" "Yes," said the woman. While she is repeating it with simple devoutness, "Stop there," said the Doctor, "Is that true?" and, on the woman's saying "Yes," "Verily, my good woman, if you hold and believe these words to be true, as indeed they are nothing but truth, your belief is stronger than mine. For I am obliged every day to pray for the increase of my faith." Whereupon the woman thanks God, and goes away from him in peace and joy. Master Antonius Musa, minister at Rochlitz<sup>2</sup>, tells me that he once pathetically complained to the Doctor that he could not himself believe what he was preaching to others. "God be thanked and praised," answered the Doctor, "that this is so with other persons as well. I thought that it was thus with me alone." Musa could never forget this encouragement as long as he lived.' His most loyal friends so little concealed this that it seemed to them much more comforting to see how even such heroes of the faith acquitted themselves in such conflicts. It was partly the result of the natural melancholy which came over him at times from his youth onwards, that led him to enter the monastery, and there depressed him almost to despair, until he found comfort in the unmerited free grace of God. In part

<sup>1</sup> Johann Mathesius, a pastor in Joachimsthal, a mining and manufacturing town in Bohemia, who was also conspicuous as a hymn-writer. He delivered sermons on Luther's life; d. 1565.

<sup>2</sup> In Bohemia.



it was simply the contradiction between the Augustinian dogma and his reason, which he held it his duty to throttle as 'the old sorceress'.

The second surprising thing is merely this—in the face of the perfect world as it came from the hand of God, or rather, in accordance with the first view, in contemplation of the world in its very evil condition—the pious resignation to God's will, Who has included all under sin, in order to deliver all<sup>1</sup>. It has sprung from the sentiment expressed by the beautiful Catholic Office of Matins in reference to Adam's Fall: 'O happy guilt, which earned such a Deliverer and One so great!'

But Luther is quite openly charged with having incited to sin and espoused the doctrine 'that so long as there is faith, even the greatest sins may be committed'. Möhler appeals in this connexion to the passage in a letter from the Wartburg, which indeed, as he is kindly willing to believe, should not be specially pressed, 'on account of the evidently over-excited mental condition of the writer,' while yet it always remains very significant and important in the history of dogma. This letter to Melanchthon, dated August 1, 1521, has only come down to us in two fragments. The first and larger portion deals with vows of chastity, and Communion in both species. Then follows obviously after a gap: 'If thou art a preacher of grace, then preach not a fictitious but a real grace. If true grace, then bring to be counteracted by it real not fictitious sins. God does not save fictitious sinners. Be a sinner, and sin mightily, but be mightier in faith, and rejoice in Christ, Who is the Victor over sin, death, and the world. Sin we must, so long as we are here below. This life is not the abode of righteousness,

<sup>1</sup> See Rom. xi. 32.



but "we look", as St. Peter saith, "for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."<sup>1</sup> It is enough that through the riches of God's glory we acknowledge the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. Sin shall not separate us from Him, although we practised unchastity and murder a thousand times, yea, a thousand times a day. Pray mightily, for thou art a very great sinner.'

Melanchthon worried himself with conscientious scruples over some utterly unimportant concern. That is quite after his manner. Luther chides him, while he comforts him: 'On the occasion of such fictitious sins one is merely brought to believe in a fictitious grace. It is better to sin downright and heartily, if only faith and joy in Christ become yet stronger.' Thus, though only in a qualified fashion, Luther desires to make the power of faith, the strength of redemption, compulsory. Hence his exaggerated description of sins. As Tetzel<sup>2</sup>, in order to describe the efficacy of the indulgence, is reported to have said that if any one had offered violence to the holy Virgin herself, by means of an indulgence he becomes as pure again as Adam in Paradise! We must remember, however, that Luther's faith in redemption was something very different from a ticket of indulgence to be had for money. From such sins as unchastity and murder Melanchthon was doubtless then safe. But Luther forthwith reverts to that which to him is the sum of truth: 'Thou hast cause to cling to Christ, and mightily to pray, for thou art a very great sinner.' He has in mind the permanent guilt of original sin, and the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Johann Tetzel, the German Dominican monk, whose sale of indulgences led to the publication of Luther's theses at Wittenberg in 1517, and so to the German Reformation; d. 1519.



consciousness of even the best of men, how greatly he needs the compassion of God. We find a parallel taken from Luther's own life in his *Table Talk*: 'When I was a monk, I wrote once to Doctor Staupitz<sup>1</sup>: "Oh, my sins, my sins, my sins"; to which he gave me this answer: "Thou desirest to be without sin, and yet hast no real sins. Christ constitutes the forgiveness of sins rightly so called. The murder of parents, open reviling, contempt of God, adultery, these are real sins. Thou must keep a list containing sins rightly so called. For them Christ is pledged to help thee. Thou must not occupy thyself with such bungling work and babyish sins, and make a mountain out of every mole hill."'

This amounts to nothing more than the power of faith and of the Atonement as against the melancholy induced by imaginary sins, or those which are unduly enhanced by the imagination. They are paradoxical, imprudent forms of expression, misleading for those who desire to be misled. Luther also threw out the observation: 'If adultery could be committed in a state of faith, there would be no sin.' He does not mean it in the sense in which at a later time Jesuit morality adapted a similar thought to the fancy of the world: 'If a man lead the wife of another astray, not because she is his wife, but because she is fair, there is no adultery.' Luther was convinced that in the state of faith, in this unqualified surrender to Christ, adultery cannot be committed. Thus by way of outdoing yet more daring declarations of mediaeval mysticism, St. Francis de Sales<sup>2</sup>—not among the least of those who

<sup>1</sup> See p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Born in Savoy 1567, bp. of Geneva, and co-founder with the French devotee, Baroness Jeanne Françoise Frémiot, of the Order of the Visitation at Annecy, capital of the department of the Haute Savoie, in 1610. He died in 1622, she in 1641.



are styled saints—wrote to his most loyal disciple, Frau von Chantal: ‘Say that you renounce all virtue, and only desire it in case God desires to give it to you; say that you would just as lief spend no pains on attaining it, in case it is not His good pleasure to make you its instrument.’ St. Augustine said, *Ama! et fac quod vis!* (love God above all things, and do what thou wilt!) That also represents a saving faith, and is exposed to the same misconception. If we desire to do justice to such sayings, we must realize the earnest conscientiousness of these men, whether they be Protestant or Catholic. So Luther once confessed worthless rubbish of all sorts, over which he was much concerned. Bugenhagen<sup>1</sup> termed this a fool’s sins, and said roughly to his distinguished penitent: ‘You are a fool; God is not angry with you, but you with God!’

But this is over and done with, and our business is to deem the Reformers neither saints nor infallible. The charge is quite just which Döllinger brings against those among us who are supposed to cling to the old doctrine, that they have given up the Reformation dogma of justification in its sharp theoretical definiteness. But the abiding and eternal element in it is the inward character of saving faith, that in the sight of God it is only the moral and religious disposition in the surrender of the heart to Christ which avails. Nothing external shares in this, except so far as it is the natural expression of this disposition, and limited by historical circumstances, in other words, so far as it is the outcome of faith. What does not come of faith, if it be not actual sin, is yet certainly nothing good. This

<sup>1</sup> Johann Bugenhagen, a preacher and theological professor at Wittenberg, and a coadjutor of Luther; d. 1558.



saving faith is in direct opposition to the Catholic *opus operatum*. The old conception of this faith has in modern days been called in question, whether from modesty or from the higher standard of culture. We may congratulate ourselves upon this, for in that case there drops a great barrier which divides us from the Catholic Church, and Protestantism has won a marked though silent victory; but in that case Catholicism must also drop much which hitherto she has maintained to belong to *her* belief. It was esteemed very conducive to salvation to die in the cowl of a monastic order, so as thereby to share in all the merits of the same. The holy Virgin appeared expressly on this account to Simon Stock, the General of the Carmelites<sup>1</sup>, with the promise that every one who dies, clothed with the robe which she brought, would escape condemnation to hell; and this convenient shroud, attested by more than one Pope, has been by its frequent use very profitable to that Order. The Jesuits have appropriated this blessing to themselves and set up a special brotherhood of the holy scapular, with the assurance that he who has upon him when dying this robe of the holy Virgin, reduced to a pair of flaps to wear over the breast and back, is secure of eternal salvation. Lest, however, owing to this assurance all propriety of conduct should be permitted utterly to disappear, they tell a story of a young man who, presuming upon this security after a dissolute life, refused to confess as a penitent even upon his deathbed. The priest warns

<sup>1</sup> An Order founded in 1126 by Berthold, Count of Limoges, at the 'brook of Elias' on Mount Carmel. Hard pressed by the Saracens, they emigrated in 1238 to the west, maintaining now that the prophet himself had been their founder and the holy Virgin a sister of their Order! Simon Stock's vision took place in 1251. Popes John XXII (1316-34) and Paul V (1605-21) are those alluded to above.



him, 'But what if, when battling in the death struggle, you pull off the fastenings of the scapular?' He fastened the scapular to him still more firmly with its golden chain. The chain was found snapped and the scapular lay beside the unfortunate man's corpse.

Moreover, the robe of an Order, worn throughout life in virtue of a vow, apart from the religious disposition which outside the walls of a monastery may be just as sincere or just as hypocritical, can effect no more than that which is put around a man for the first time when he is dying. All the masses paid for by strangers on behalf of those who know nothing of them, and upon whose disposition accordingly they make no impression—and the main business of the ordinary clerical office is in fact masses for the dead—so far as they desire to be more than a pious prayer on behalf of a deceased friend, are inoperative after we deny *opus operatum*. In that case also it will no longer happen, as not infrequently occurs in the chief Catholic countries of the south, that a robber and murderer holds himself a good Catholic because he carefully fulfils all ecclesiastical duties.

The Protestant faith rejects any merit in God's sight. It must be admitted that there lies a certain stimulus to morals in the Catholic teaching concerning merit, as administered to children and to people who have not yet given up childish ways. People plod on with good works, yet they also desire to have some advantage thereby, and this longing is not devoid of piety, for the reward is expected only so far as it is reasonable and as God has so promised. Moreover Christ, it is true, only gave the name of blessed to the pious disposition in its manifold *nuances*, yet He also promised to the exemplifications of that disposition in



the form of benevolence eternal life through the keeping of His commandments. With a view to the promise of such a reward Catholicism has acquired many rich foundations, and has on such grounds erected many noble churches, just as Buddhism and Moham-medanism on the same ground have accomplished the like. The Protestant Church sometimes dispensed with this, as not so understanding the exchange of the goods of this world for those of the next, offered for her to acquire by service. Nevertheless the large funds which in our own day the section of a people by no means rich gathers for the Free Church of Scotland<sup>1</sup>, as well as the churches which the Gustavus Adolphus Society<sup>2</sup> builds, are good proofs that Protestantism too can appeal in its own support to this activity.

But if merit is based upon renunciations there readily arises that virtue which our poet has described, without any ecclesiastical reference, in the words: 'Gained by wrestling with flesh and blood, and reckoned to heaven as meritorious.' The severities of Catholic discipline can excite even a well-disposed nature, which feels its own impurity, to spiritual pride. 'I chastise myself,' wrote the eloquent Bishop Wittmann<sup>3</sup> in his diary, 'but I count the strokes, and am proud of

<sup>1</sup> Founded in 1843 as a protest against the jurisdiction of the civil courts in certain ecclesiastical matters. In 1895-6 over £650,000 were raised by it for the various purposes of that Church.

<sup>2</sup> A society formed in 1832 in celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the battle of Lutzen, in which Gustavus Adolphus II, king of Sweden, defeated (though at the cost of his own life) the German general Wallenstein. Gustavus was the champion of the Protestant cause. By 1883 the society had come to have a yearly revenue of about £43,000 devoted to the helping of needy Protestant Churches, especially in Roman Catholic districts.

<sup>3</sup> George Michael Wittmann, a Roman Catholic mystic, bishop designate of Ratisbon, who died (1832) before his appointment was confirmed by the Pope.



their number.' Pure morality, on the other hand, is to do good for the good's sake, for God's sake, to endure what is painful as the Divine ordinance, and to receive all things as the dispensation of grace. There is an obvious parallel in the higher relationships of family life. In particular, gifts unearned by merit are received from the hand of affection, since a faithful heart does not serve for the sake of reward. The mother, who watches for nights at the bed of her sick child, looks for no reward other than the first sweet smile of recovery. All is in that case received as the free gift of affection and of God. Of such a nature too is genuine faith, as Luther describes it drawn from his inmost experience: 'Faith is a Divine work within us which transforms us and gives us a new birth through the power of God. Oh, faith is a living, busy, active, powerful thing, so that it is impossible that it should not unceasingly effect good. Moreover it does not ask whether good works are to be done, but before any question is put it has done them, and is always doing them. Such faith is a lively, bold reliance upon the favour of God, so confident, that for this it would die a thousand times. And such reliance makes a man joyous, bold, and cheerful towards God and all creation. Hence without any constraint the man is willing and pleased to do good to any one, to serve any one, to undergo all manner of things for the love and glory of God Who has shown him such favour. In this way it is impossible to separate work from faith.' Therefore 'if the faithful children of God were fully renewed in this life, they would stand in need of no law, but would do absolutely of their own accord what they are bound to do according to God's will, just as the sun, the moon, and all the stars of heaven pursue unhindered their



appointed course without being exhorted or driven or forced, in accordance with the ordinance which God has once given them, precisely as the angels render a wholly willing obedience'. This is the freedom of a Christian man, and so the faithful soul coincides with what the poet has termed the *beauteous soul*, namely the nature which is capable, energetic, nay, noble, restored and sanctified through Christ.

To waive the consideration of personal work and merit is so natural to piety in its self-surrender to God, that declarations of this kind, even on the part of strict Catholics of mediaeval times, are not unfrequently to be met with. Gregory VII<sup>1</sup> in his first excommunication of Henry IV<sup>2</sup> said (only, it is true, in his appeal to St. Peter), 'Through thy favour, and not on account of my own works, did it please thee that the Christian people entrusted to thee hearken to me!' In a deeply religious spirit, Catharine of Siena<sup>3</sup> consoled a noble youth upon the scaffold with the 'primary truth that it is solely of grace and compassion that the Redeemer receives him, not on account of any sort of work'. And she herself closed her life of abundant activity with the words: 'O Lord, Thou callest me, and I come, not by reason of my merits, but solely by reason of Thy compassion which I invoke through Thy blood!' The same thought was the parent of the fundamental dogma of the Reformation. Moreover, we have here a recon-

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> The emperor was summoned to Rome by Gregory in 1076 to answer to the charges of simony, sacrilege, and oppression. Henry in rage declared the Pope deposed. The latter retaliated by excommunicating Henry. Later in 1076 the disaffected German princes in alliance with the Pope suspended Henry, who, however (January 1077), did penance before the Pope at Canossa, and received conditional absolution.

<sup>3</sup> The celebrated Italian saint, who died at Rome in 1380, and was canonized in 1461.



ciling of the harsh aspect of the inequality of earthly conditions with a view to the highest earthly happiness, viz. to have the power to do a really considerable amount of good. Place side by side a poor servant girl who can do nothing but tend and love day and night the child committed to her keeping, and a powerful and good emperor, from whom every day there goes forth untold blessing. If in both there is faith, and so too a real good desire, both, emperor and children's maid, are on just the same footing in the sight of God.

Whoever through a fortunate chance is placed in the position to accomplish some act which in the estimation of the world is great or generous—to more than forgive an enemy, to save a man's life at the risk of one's own—owing to the praise of the world is easily possessed involuntarily with pride at his own merits, and yet he is conscious in himself that the purity of his sentiment is thereby tarnished. Or if a man has had eminence assigned him by fortune, so that great talents and an energetic character have placed him among the first of his nation in a position where far-reaching decisions fraught with good fortune emanate from him, then, in the midst of the affection and admiration with which his surroundings brilliantly invest him, he easily becomes a miracle in his own eyes, and is spent in worldly frivolity. High above this stands genuine faith. Its regard is solely fixed upon the mercy of God. It is aware that all human works are inadequate; but if occasion calls for action, it takes place as the natural expression of his life and energies without thought of thanks in the sight of the world or of God.

Thus it is that the Protestant doctrine of faith bears within it the purest moral teaching. Moreover, as soon



as it entered upon its Reformation shape, it contained a charter, only at that date not yet realized, protesting also against dogmatic constraint. For if it be solely faith in the mercy of God through Christ which saves, then the other articles of faith will certainly range themselves in organic ramification around this lofty centre, only that differences of impression and errors concerning them can do no hurt to the soul, provided that that firm ground of salvation remains undisturbed.

Justification by faith alone is not the denial, it is rather the confirmation, of the highest freedom, for it involves this, that the man in matters relating to his eternal salvation is independent of any sort of priestly mediation, of any sort of human pronouncement, of any sort of legal tradition, that he stands alone before the face of God, and that it is only in his own heart that the decision is made with regard to him how far he belongs to the truly Catholic, the ideal Church. 'Thou must determine it by thyself,' said Luther, 'it counts as thy life! thy inmost, eternal life.' Accordingly in the necessary development of this doctrine of salvation by faith only there lies determined the whole warranty for the subjective character of Protestantism, free, but set free by means of Christ, and surrendered to Him. This was the banner which was given the Reformers, with the inscription *sola fide*<sup>1</sup> as the token with which they should prevail. This we still ever bear aloft and unconquered. Our Gospel of the ideal Church is only the inscription on the other side of the same banner, which has for an unfailing crown the monogram of Christ. For if the believer stand alone before God with that disposition which he has within him, he needs indeed an external Church, so as to experience

<sup>1</sup> By faith alone.



the historical<sup>1</sup> working of the Redeemer upon him, but in no definite form of Church is his salvation involved; no external means is indispensable to that salvation, and no decree of a Church can wrest it from him, so long as he retains it in his heart.

Since, however, it is only the inward character and spirituality which has this abiding significance, nothing would hinder this pious surrender to every ideal which we sum up in the name of Christ from being also called love, as St. John is wont to call it, and as St. Paul calls it faith working by love<sup>1</sup>. When he sums up the three graces of Christianity, love is in his view the highest among them.<sup>2</sup> Thus it is not merely the active love, typified by Martha; rather that of Mary, who sits at the Master's feet.<sup>3</sup> It also with the eagle Apostle<sup>4</sup> mounts direct to the Godhead. For we cannot fail to see that the saying of St. Paul, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law, receives its keenness of expression through the contrast with those who base their salvation upon these deeds of the Law, just as Luther's version of this statement, viz. 'through faith *alone*', was rendered definite through similar contrast with the reliance of the Pope's followers upon external works. Accordingly, if Catholicism were able to write love upon its Church standard, and sincerely to deduce all the consequences of this principle, then Peter and Paul might well stand once more in fraternal union side by side, or, more strictly speaking, Paul and John. But these consequences, upon which formerly the peace Conference at Ratisbon<sup>5</sup> was wrecked, and on account of which the glowing love of genuine mystics was so often an object of suspicion to

<sup>1</sup> Gal. v. 6.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 13.<sup>3</sup> Luke x. 39.<sup>4</sup> St. John the Evangelist, whose symbol is the eagle.<sup>5</sup> See p. 18.



the authorities of the Catholic Church, from Tauler<sup>1</sup> down to Marie de Guyon<sup>2</sup>, would have extended the Reformation to the Catholic Church ; for all significance in the merely external performance of works under the direction of the Church would forthwith come to an end, the mediation of the priest would be no longer a necessity, and his sentence, even though proceeding from the Vatican, no longer decisive for him who by means of his love is indissolubly united with Christ, and has become one with Him in his future ideal. The faith which alone saves and the love which alone saves would join hands in the universal ideal Church.

<sup>1</sup> Johann Tauler, a noted German mystic and preacher, a member of the Dominican Order, died at Strassburg, 1361.

<sup>2</sup> Jeanne Marie Bouvier de la Mothe Guyon, a French mystic, one of the founders of the religious body called 'Quietists', imprisoned and afterwards banished for her religious opinions to Blois, where she died, 1717.



## CHAPTER II

### ACTS OF SUPERABUNDANT DEVOTION

#### A. Works of Supererogation.

THE Catholic Church teaches that he who is justified has the power by virtue of the continuous aid of God's grace to accomplish good works which more than suffice. This is done by the performance of evangelical *counsels*. These, as distinct from Divine commands which hold good for all, and cannot be left unheeded without sin, are only to be accomplished by those who strive after a higher perfection than general duty demands. This view established itself as early as the second century, when the Church set up a moral ideal of unconditional severance from secular life, while she was nevertheless intelligent enough to perceive that this is not a thing to be carried out by all. Accordingly she disapproved of those who desired to extend this to be a universal duty of Christians, as Marcion<sup>1</sup> in the case of celibacy, whereby, if it could be completely effected, mankind would die out, although St. Augustine made the comforting observation that then the kingdom of God would come so much the quicker. The doctrine developed by scholasticism was, in spite of Protestant opposition, passed over in silence at Trent, and only incidentally mentioned in the Roman Catechism<sup>2</sup>, but was set forth in the decrees of the highest authorities in the Church and unanimously

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 4.



maintained by their dogmatists. They appeal to our Lord's words to the rich young man, who had already kept all the commandments of God : ' If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven : and come, follow Me.'<sup>1</sup> They also appeal to St. Paul's advice that it is better to remain unwedded, although it is not sinful to enter on the married state.<sup>2</sup>

The Protestant argument on the other side was, since even the regenerate, so long as he sojourns here below, never fully *satisfies* the Law of God, how should he *outdo* it ? Moreover, the so-called evangelical counsels in their bare externality and their claims to merit are nothing but decisions of men. The Council of Trent appeared to admit the first of these points, when it confessed that in this mortal life even holy persons fall into slight, everyday sins ; only, since Catholicism considers good works as possessed of individuality and inherent value, it is able to discount those small venial sins, and there is at times found quite a splendid balance to the good. Thus then there may be *works* of supererogation ; only there is no *morality* which can claim that title. When Christ pronounced the sublime command : ' Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect ! ' He gave no hint thereby that the monk and the nun came nearest to that perfection, and this by conformity to ' evangelical counsels ' rather than by the fulfilment of the Divine commands ; by unnatural renunciations rather than by that loyalty to all the duties of affection which was the distinguishing feature of His followers. Why should the mother, who amid cares, vigils, and privations brings up her

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 21.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 7 ff.



children to the honour of God, or a Monica<sup>1</sup>, who wrests the son of her tears from sin for his lofty destination in God's kingdom, be of less significance than the nun who awakes to the singing of the hours, even though in the workings of her imagination she bears in her life the sufferings of Christ? Protestantism merely regards the act as the expression, in conformity with duty, of the moral disposition, as often as the occasion calls for it. It is therefore forced to regard a presumed excess above the degree of morality required as a dangerous conceit, which tends to a pious egoism, aiming only at the salvation of one's own soul, and to spiritual pride, while ordinary and family life, thinking that it cannot even strive after the highest, bereft of its ideal, incurs the risk of flagging in the matter of morals.

Against the Protestant contention that the demands of the moral law advance indefinitely *pari passu* with the inner growth of the man, and thus always make him to come short of his true self, Möhler urges that in the life of holy persons precisely the opposite phenomenon presents itself: 'The consciousness of finding oneself in possession of a universal unlimited power is that which reveals ever tenderer and nobler relations of man to God and to his fellow men, so that he who is sanctified in Christ and filled with His Spirit feels himself always superior to the Law.' This statement is absolutely Protestant, and in fact quite in Luther's manner, when he describes how the Tables of the Law lie broken behind the believer, who of his own free will and affection accomplishes numberless good works, without questioning very closely whether they are done only from love to God and his neighbour.

<sup>1</sup> Mother of St. Augustine. See vol. i. p. 32.



But, continues Möhler, 'It is the nature of the love that proceeds from God, which stands immeasurably higher than the demands of the Law, that it is never satisfied with its own proofs, and is ever growing in ingenuity, so that believers of this sort not unfrequently appear to those men who stand at a lower stage to be fanatics, spiritually diseased, eccentric characters.' So it is in fact, and not always without justification. We honour the enthusiastic disposition from which such works come, but it is just there that we often fail to find wisdom and a humanity which is fair to look upon and at harmony with itself, if instead of this there are only to be found self-torturings, laying desolate the life through contempt for all the natural gifts of God, and disowning the sentiments which Nature herself has planted in man.

Something of this kind is to be observed even in the lives of those saints who, through their excellence of heart or genial qualities, belong not merely to the Roman Church but to the whole of Christendom. St. Francis of Assisi<sup>1</sup> casts his clothes at his wealthy father and goes about in his beggar's cowl from door to door, with his pot to collect his dinner from fragments of all kinds tumbled together. St. Elizabeth<sup>2</sup>, whom we hold in affectionate regard, was at last brought to such a pitch by her harsh father confessor, as to condemn the memory of her hitherto tenderly loved spouse, and to thank God that she had now also renounced the natural love for her children. Madame

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Francesco Bernardone, the celebrated Italian monk and preacher, died at Assisi 1226, and was canonized by Gregory IX in 1228. He was founder of the Franciscan Order, authorized by the Pope in 1210.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of Andrew II of Hungary, and wife of Louis, landgrave of Thuringia, celebrated for her sanctity; died at Marburg, Germany, in 1231.



de Guyon<sup>1</sup>, a saint in the way of love towards God, who failed to be canonized only because the Court at Versailles and subsequently the Court of Rome found in her a tinge of heresy, forced herself so far to overcome all natural feelings of disgust as to swallow the excreta of the sick in the hospital. It is not for nothing that folklore tells of wonderful saints. It was only an extreme case when herbivorous anchorites in Mesopotamia for the purpose of self-humiliation caused themselves to be driven with the cattle to the pasture, or Todi, the spirited, unhappy, Franciscan poet, whom the Pope excommunicated, whom the people pronounced blessed, long Jacob (Giacopone, as the children called him), who from humility affected to be insane, and went on all fours with saddle and accoutrements to the market to be ridden by the children. Whatever in the province of religion is done with pious intent always has a claim to respect; and yet much in the lives of those who achieved good works of supererogation reminds one of the noble knight of La Mancha<sup>2</sup>, who indeed also was borne along, possessed of lofty thoughts, in his ideal yearnings. His countryman, Don Inigo von Loyola<sup>3</sup>, forms a pretty close parallel, who, also inspired by legends of the saints, as the former was by stories of chivalry, for his spiritual knighthood, fought long with windmills, until in the then condition of the Roman Church he formed his forecast of the great destiny

<sup>1</sup> See p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Don Quixote, the hero of the celebrated novel of the Spaniard, Miguel de Cervantes.

<sup>3</sup> Commonly known as Ignatius Loyola, the Spanish soldier and prelate, founder (in 1534) and first General of the 'Society of Jesus' (Jesuit Order), of which, however, Lainez (see vol. i. p. 40) was really the controlling spirit; d. 1556.



of the Order to be founded by him, which has been carried out by his more sagacious followers.

Nevertheless, Möhler was not wrong in thinking that that doctrine, like everything that holds its ground among men through centuries and stirs their feelings seriously, is based upon something deeper. Who could say that what Gregory VII<sup>1</sup>, Bernard of Clairvaux<sup>2</sup>, Luther, Calvin, Washington<sup>3</sup> accomplished has been the bounden duty of all? It is for the very reason that they have achieved something extraordinary that they are exalted above the multitude, immortal, while still upon earth. Theirs was the act, and God's was the grace, Who bestowed on them the strength, the time, and the opportunity. In this way the element which in the eyes of God and men gives works the character inaptly called supererogatory is their being heroic virtues and deeds in view of the Church, capable as these certainly are of being carried out in the obscure solitude of a hut or in a palace. Those who practised them, truly pious men as they were, never moreover thought that in this they were doing a superfluity of good. They trusted themselves like other poor sinners to the Divine mercy. The Catholic Church itself has preserved a wholesome sense of this in the old legend which tells us that St. Anthony,<sup>4</sup> after he had endured unheard of things in the wilderness, desired at one time to ascertain what he had obtained by all his self-denial and conflicts. Then there is shewn him in a dream a cobbler in Alexandria, with whom he may compare himself in merit. He goes to the city, finds the man, enquires into his gifts

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 121.

<sup>3</sup> George Washington, first President of the United States, d. 1799.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. i. p. 190.



and pious exercises, but he knows no answer to give to the saint's questions, except that in the morning he utters a few words of prayer on behalf of the whole city, and then applies himself to his trade.

Those highly favoured men have done more than others only because more was given them, and nevertheless they merely did their duty. The great demand also was laid upon the rich young man only by reason of the great mission imposed upon the age in which he lived, and because our Lord saw in him the capacity for fulfilling it.<sup>1</sup> Who thinks of doubting that at that moment there was no higher duty for him than to seize the outstretched hand of the Saviour and follow Him in His life of want and in death? His refusal lost him, at any rate for the time, a share in the kingdom of God, and for a permanency the highest happiness in the religious sphere. Christ too did not present His demand as something that more than sufficed, but He deemed the young man's fulfilment of the Law hitherto as inadequate; more strictly considered, He desired, since He conceived an affection for him, to reveal to him the insufficient character of his actions hitherto. The young man went away sorrowful, and this sorrow perhaps became to him what St. Paul terms a sorrow that brings salvation<sup>2</sup>.

But St. Paul's recommendation of celibacy was based by himself upon the distress of the time. A certain predilection moreover can be perceived for the position which, by reason of his calling and inclination, was given him as an unmarried man for the kingdom of God's sake. Notwithstanding, he himself cannot have regarded as of universal obligation his remark: 'He that is unmarried is careful for the things of the Lord,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 16 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See 2 Cor. vii. 10.



how he may please the Lord : but he that is married is careful for the things of the world, how he may please his wife.<sup>1</sup> It is only a remark as to what often happens, in order simply to recommend what one prefers. If made of universal application, it would deny the significance of Christian marriage. Mere anxiety in view of the pains which marriage brings, and which in the long run everything brings for which man acquires a real affection, may well have had its place as a momentary reason for the friendly sentiment of the Apostle towards his youthful friends at Corinth ; but, if we regard the matter from the high Christian standpoint, this would be as far as possible from a reason for shrinking from any sort of honourable human relationship.

With his wide, grand conception, the Apostle said : 'All things are yours.'<sup>2</sup> The man in the cowl of camel's hair, whose food was locusts and wild honey<sup>3</sup>, stood no higher than did He who came to him, who without any kind of vow ate and drank with the people, and expressed approbation of the very lavishness by which a loving heart disclosed itself to Him<sup>4</sup>. Catholicism, carrying its principles to their logical conclusion, desired not a moral relation to nature, but only the ignoring of nature. Even the sex which amounts to the half of mankind appeared to it now and then nothing but a door for the devil (*femina ianua diaboli*). St. Aloysius<sup>5</sup> is even to the present day commended because he had so carefully controlled his thoughts that he had not once openly looked his mother in the face. By virtue of Protestantism in the course of its development there was not indeed

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 32 f.<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 22.<sup>3</sup> Matt. iii. 4.<sup>4</sup> Luke vii. 37 ff.<sup>5</sup> Louis Gonzaga ; d. 1591.



effected for the first time, but brought into clear consciousness, a morality which depends upon the imitation of Jesus, and which is to be called not a higher but the true sort. This, with a good conscience and with conscientiousness, rejoices in God's world, unconstrained and conscious of its rights. Living its earthly life, it shares its culture, joys, and cares, with the function of attaching everything corporeal to the spiritual, everything transitory to that which is imperishable, while Catholicism remained delivered over to the antagonism between earthly and spiritual life, between nature and the unnatural, between lower and higher morality. Not as though men of decorous life in the world were lacking to the Catholic Church : least of all are they lacking among their clergy. Their educated people live as we do ; but earnest-minded Catholics can only accept of its conditions with a divided conscience. It is a purely Catholic sentiment which Chateaubriand<sup>1</sup> wrote in his *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* : 'I have not reached the goal ; I have not put on the monk's cowl.' He would have cut a strange enough figure in it ! All Catholic people of culture have by means of their modern training unconsciously assumed a Protestant character.

The superstition as to good works of supererogation has in fact not been the origin, but has become the doctrinal basis, of monastic life as well as of the glorification of the saints.

### B. Monastic Life.

The condition of monk is not peculiar to Christendom. The Roman man of the world described thus the

<sup>1</sup> François René Auguste, Viscomte de Chateaubriand, the celebrated French author and statesman, representing France at Rome and afterwards in England ; d. at Paris in 1848.



Order of Essenes in Palestine: 'A wonderful race, without a woman, without money, under the shadow of the palms, they are every day renewed by the crowd of those whom, weary of life, the wave of destiny brings to share their customs. Thus there is maintained for thousands of years a people among whom no one is born!' There we have a picture of a monkish community. Eusebius<sup>1</sup>, the first ecclesiastical historian, held the Therapeutae<sup>2</sup> in Egypt to be apostolic Christians. Their partner in descent, the Jew, Philo, who, although he had heard nothing of his contemporary, Christ, had often visited those people's monasteries (*monasteria*), describes them thus: 'Giving up their possessions to their relatives, they live in common in solitary places, men and women carefully separated, in unbroken continence, wholly given up to the contemplation of Divine things. They study from sunrise the Holy Scriptures, or compose and sing pious hymns. Not till evening do they take any drink or food, many only every third day. They never touch wine and meat.' Every Christian monastery would be proud of having such a memory behind it. Moreover, monks of Serapis<sup>4</sup> preceded the Egyptian hermits, while Mohammedanism, and to a yet larger extent Buddhism, produced an abundant army of monks. The self-tortures of Indian penitents can match themselves with all the self-denials of Christian monasticism. This however arose by spon-

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 108.

<sup>2</sup> A sect mentioned in a work attributed, but doubtfully, to Philo. Their existence, however, has been doubted of late. See Kurtz, *Church History*, Macpherson's translation, London, 1891, i. 10, § 1.

<sup>3</sup> A Hellenistic Jewish philosopher of Alexandria; d. after 40 A.D.

<sup>4</sup> The Greek and Roman name of a deity of Egyptian origin, the lord of the under world. His worship was a combination of Egyptian and Greek cults.



taneous growth upon Church soil, out of the moral teaching which prescribed the renunciation of the world. It was not engendered by the enthusiasm of the apostolic Church and of the generations that immediately followed, but in the third century by the extreme tension of the times of martyrdom, when hermits, amid the horrors of the Egyptian wilderness, experienced in their imaginations the temptations of secular life. Owing to the disciples who in imitation assembled round them, solitude gave place to aggregate bodies, and the next century saw the first monastic communities in which extravagant enthusiasm, as well as the dull dying out of the same, could be tempered by a fixed rule and supervision.

In the West monasticism was first marvelled at, then copied and developed into a rich variety of forms. The Church did not found, but only gave its countenance to these communities in their various distinguishing features and costumes, and by means of its legislation took care that, without molestation, even such as might arise from mutual jealousy, they should subserve the general interest. The monks, in accordance with their popular origin from the common people, at the first stood apart from the clergy. 'The monk must absolutely flee women and bishops, for neither of these two permit him who has once entangled himself in intimacy with them, to remain longer in the peaceful cell, or with pure eyes to cling to the contemplation of Divine things.' But soon they grew up to have connexion with the hierarchy in many ways, the monastic minister over against the historic priesthood as the secular ministry, Martha over against Mary.<sup>1</sup> The intention of acquiring special

<sup>1</sup> See Luke x. 38 ff.



merit in the sight of God or of atoning for guilt by monastic vows, and if a man was not able actually to enter the life still, by founding or endowing a monastery, to share in the merits of those who despise the world, caused thousands of religious houses to spring up, and supplied them with a constant renewal of inmates. 'Give me this spot,' said St. Eligius to his king, 'that I may here set up a ladder, by means of which we may both mount to heaven.'<sup>1</sup> The usual fate of an Order in the Middle Ages was that it was founded by an enthusiastic individual of ability, who impressed upon it its image and stamp, and so through the fame of his strict methods and piety it became a moral force among the people, thereby acquired riches, and in the enjoyment of them gently sank back into obscurity. Then in the thirteenth century came the mendicant friars, who, no longer shut in behind monastic walls, went forth through the world and yet desired to accept nothing of its comforts or riches, but, actually making a virtue of poverty, went through the world proclaiming their Gospel and begging.

The English Reformer<sup>2</sup> spoke thus of the monasticism of his time: 'The monk is a corpse risen from the grave, who, covered with graveclothes, is set by the devil to rove about in the world.' The Church's cry of pain as it regarded itself in the fifteenth century, this profound feeling of the necessity of a Reformation, had to do also with the monasteries. This was clear from the saying of the time: 'What the devil shrinks from doing, a monk accomplishes without shrinking.' Clemanges<sup>3</sup> too complained: 'If a maiden takes the

<sup>1</sup> Cp. p. 76. Eligius was bp. of Noyan; d. 659.

<sup>2</sup> John Wycliffe, 'the Morning Star of the Reformation,' d. at Lutterworth, 1384. The quotation is from *Trialog.* iv. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas of Clemanges was rector of the University of Paris in 1393,



veil, it is almost the same as if she were offered for prostitution.' The aim at conquering nature not infrequently sinks in time into an immoral violation of nature. The vow of poverty was helped out by the riches of the corporation and its enjoyments ; the vow of chastity, where it was still kept, sought compensation in drunken excess ; obedience became lawlessness and unbridled indulgence. For the chief dignitaries of the Order the vows possessed a humorous signification. We are told of the saying of a genial German abbot, that he could not very well complain of the three monastic vows : that of poverty brings him in yearly 100,000 ducats, the vow of obedience places him beside the princes of the realm, and as regards the third, the Lord has blessed him with a charming family. The mendicant friars, no longer the bearers of ecclesiastical learning, were despised, and, what was worse, mocked for their ignorance, their heresy-hunting, their dirt.

The Reformation, when at that time it actually came, with its Gospel of salvation by faith alone, to which the monkish system appeared merely a wanton sporting with external matters, shook the foundations of all monasteries. The modified assertion of Catholic theologians that monastic life is not in itself perfection, but a calling in life for the purpose of attaining perfection, was met by the statement that every other innocent calling in life as well guarantees this opportunity. In the sudden dissolution of monasteries, so far as Protestant hands could reach, much harshness was at that time shown towards individuals, who were thrust out into an unfriendly world for which neither their

and had a deep sense of the corruption of the Church. He afterwards retired into solitude.



habits nor their inclinations prepared them. Such is the concomitant of a time when things sacred in the eyes of previous generations, and still in those of a section of the people, are suddenly thrown into a corner. Also, the excessive wealth of the monasteries excited greed, and Luther is of opinion that in the secularization of these institutions the Popish princes and country nobles were more Lutheran than his own religious associates. Moreover, the Council of Trent had a reforming tendency in the re-establishment of discipline and morals, so far as the maintenance of the existing monastic houses permitted it or demanded it. Already the new Order<sup>1</sup> bare rule there, which as a third form of monasticism likewise took its place in the world. Entering as it did into all its customs and practices, it nevertheless formed a world for itself, in order that for the greater glory of God it might dominate the Catholic Church, thrust back Protestantism, and use every means to spread the Christianity of the Jesuits over the whole earth. Alongside of this, and confined to mediaeval forms of endeavour, there came Orders for pious deeds of charity, and others which, by means of ordinary arts and methods, undertook to bring into existence great historical works.

It cannot be shown that these new Orders and the old ones in their restored form were, at the middle of the eighteenth century, sunk so low in point of morals as those of pre-Reformation time had been. Only there lay upon them the reactionary deadness of Catholicism, succeeding to the energy of the time of restoration, and the pernicious system of benefices held *in commendam*, the bestowal of at least the rich abbeys

<sup>1</sup> The 'Society of Jesus', see vol. i. p. 25.



by the king and his female friends upon members of the aristocracy merely as means for obtaining secular glory.

The 'Society of Jesus,' after they had accomplished a good part of their work, not by means of great deeds and dignities, but by the untiring, uniform, and sagacious application of effort, had become in the second place a great trading company; alongside of their earnest *Church* morality had built up as well a suitable one for the needs of the world; and as regards their internal working, by means of a system in which every one was a spy upon every one else, had extinguished any devoted affection towards themselves. Their worldly sagacity imposed upon the nations, as is set forth in the proverb: 'If you are in company with a Jesuit, you can catch the devil in the open field.' There is another: 'What the devil cannot make, he contracts for with a Jesuit.' The principle of their secular morality, viz. the end sanctifies the means, is never found so baldly declared as this in a recognized writing of the Jesuits. This would have been too much opposed to their worldly sagacity, and it is perhaps merely a piquant mode of expressing the objection that according to Jesuit morals any means may be permitted for the attainment of a good and even sacred end.

This objection is to some extent founded upon facts. The Jesuits have undeniably applied cunning and force for the oppression of Protestantism. Accordingly they have not hesitated to hold themselves justified even in sending out assassins against non-Catholic princes, or at any rate in applauding their deeds. Partly, it is based upon the moral writings of the Jesuits, which they composed mainly for the



instruction of confessors, with the whole of ecclesiastical morality expressed in the form of question and answer, determining how much or how little a thing is sinful. In this way they succeed in showing their acuteness in solving the problem how far a person, merely skimming over sins, may without sin yield to very questionable wishes and passions, inasmuch as they only found it to be a complete sin in a case where a Divine command is transgressed with full clearness of knowledge and full freedom of will. In particular, the moral theology of the Spanish Jesuit, Antonio von Escobar<sup>1</sup>, set the fashion in this respect, in so far as he had collected together the Jesuit practice with regard to all moral questions from the writings of twenty-four distinguished savants of the Order. The basis here set forth for a moral estimate, viz., that the action acquires its particular (moral) import from its aim, when combined with the acknowledgement of the historical truth that great aims sometimes also demand great means, may without hesitation, and in fact in a completely Protestant sense, be interpreted as meaning that it is the intention (*intentio*), i. e. the disposition, which determines the moral value of an action. It may, however, involve the justification of any means for the presumably good end, so that even the most frightful crime is permissible, if it is committed not for the purpose of sinning, but to attain a sacred end in the opinion of the Order. Moreover, in accordance with a tendency which we meet with in Catholic theology, the Jesuits so far developed the belief in authority that, when there is a disagreement between our inclinations and our conscience, the probable opinion of a teacher of eminence

<sup>1</sup> A Spanish Jesuit, celebrated as a casuist, d. 1669.



is sufficient to establish the morally preferable line of conduct, even if that line appear in itself less probable. Older moralists of the Order had for the most part placed side by side the *pros* and *cons* of an action, while they expressed approval of the stricter view, or left the decision for time to ripen, whereupon their followers believed themselves justified in declaring the laxer decision as probable. This theory of probability shook the stability of conscience. It permitted ambiguity of language, lying to the hurt of a heretic, murder in order to save honour in the eyes of the world, or it at any rate made morality subservient to the most miserable social considerations. For the justification of ambiguity in an oath was declared to be probable where a man thinks one thing and says another, provided that it is done from a worthy motive. It was declared to be no particular sin to bring against a heretic a false accusation that he had injured a figure of Christ on the Cross, and it is well known that ere now Catholic tribunals have pronounced sentences of death upon such a charge. It was declared permissible to murder an accuser or witness who threatens us with the disclosure of a true but concealed crime, if he warns us that he is determined not to abstain from doing so; it was declared to be lawful to give a seduced woman in her despair criminal counsel, in order to avert worse things. The question whether it is permitted to put to death one who has given me a box on the ear or a blow with a stick is answered in the affirmative by Father Lessius<sup>1</sup> on the ground that under certain circumstances the

<sup>1</sup> Leonard Lessius of Louvain. He also said that if there be a reason for concealing the truth by ambiguous language or mental reservation, there was no sin in so doing, *and that this was the general opinion of theologians.*



highest degree of insult is to abstain from vengeance. Escobar limits it to persons of rank, for boxes on the ear or blows do not involve any special disgrace in the case of commoners. How widely diverse is the morality of the Society of Jesus from the teaching of Jesus! Writings of such a character are, it is true, only composed by individual Jesuits, but the strict discipline of the heads of the Order did not permit the publication of a writing without the approval of the authorities. They also possess strict moralists, but their desire was to exercise control over all, both the conscientiously pious and the pious children of the world, to whom they made the yoke of Christ extremely light. Whether the code of the Order actually declares that the heads can even command a crime in order to attain a sacred end, is left doubtful owing to ambiguity of language.

Pascal<sup>1</sup>, one of the great in the kingdom of God, such as Catholicism from time to time has produced and the Catholic authorities have excommunicated, in his *Provincial Letters* pronounced sentence upon that Jesuit morality, although all the quotations which his friends brought him from Jesuit writings had not the same demonstrative force. The Jesuits obtained from the Pope a condemnation of the *Provincial Letters*. They had, however, impressed an ineffaceable stamp upon the brow of the Order, and even the French language preserves the memory of Escobar in the expression *escobarderie*, meaning subtle lies. The Papacy at length determined to repudiate some assertions of Jesuit moralists as a scandal and dangerous

<sup>1</sup> Blaise Pascal, the celebrated French mathematician, philosopher, and author. He identified himself with the fortunes of the Cistercian abbey of Port Royal in opposition to Jesuit teaching; d. 1662.



to good morals. The Parliament at Paris caused their writings to be burnt by the hangman. Catholicism thereby rid itself of responsibility for Jesuit morals, and in truth the whole of Catholicism is far from being Jesuit, although we have heard from French bishops still living, and also from the middle of the German Reichstag, the cry, 'We are all Jesuits!' It is certainly this Order which in an exceptional manner successfully represented post-Reformation Catholicism, and its morality only developed Catholic tendencies to their most questionable issues. Upon Protestant soil such a double-tongued doctrine of morals could not have sprung up. It is true that long before the days of the Jesuits and of Jacob's mess of pottage<sup>1</sup>, sinful humanity from time to time set itself to make use of bad means for so-called good ends, but with a conscience which winced from it. Jesuitism reduced the seductive principle to a system, and established upon that basis its wide-reaching activity. A combination of highly peculiar political circumstances was connected with the fact that statesmen of modern education, jealous of the secular power of the Jesuits, demanded their overthrow, and all Catholic peoples, trained up in their schools, looked on at this with indifference. But the Papacy, as soon as it could again move its arms freely, re-established the Jesuits, to all appearance placed itself at that time in their hands, and thus took upon itself a share of the responsibility for the moral teaching which they had never recalled.

In France the disposition first took shape which is expressed by a satirical writing to the effect that henceforward the French nation desired to submit to

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxv. 34.



monasteries merely as hospitals for the mentally diseased. It is not really Voltaire<sup>1</sup> who speaks, when in his *Pucelle* he brings a Benedictine monk into the kingdom of dulness, and makes him feel as much at home there as though he were still in his monastery. It was the French people of that time who spoke through him: 'A monk! What sort of a profession is that? It is simply to have none; to pledge oneself in contravention of reason by means of an indissoluble oath, and to be a slave and live at the expense of other people.' In order to free his States from Romish usurpations, and with the object of giving countenance only to that which is useful, Joseph II<sup>2</sup> began the overthrow of monasteries. The first French Revolution overthrew them *en masse*. Also in German countries, after the dissolution of the old German Empire<sup>3</sup>, almost all monastic property was confiscated, both on the part of Protestant and of Catholic princes, especially in Bavaria.

The political restoration, dating from 1815, aimed at combining with the secular power of the Pope and of the Jesuits the re-establishment of monastic life as well. The Concordat with the crown of Bavaria guaranteed the setting up of some monasteries. Under King Ludwig I<sup>4</sup> much more was carried out than was promised. Here and there they took it in hand again to transfer the State schools to the monks. Only a few Benedictines found themselves capable of this and disposed for it. Nevertheless, the educa-

<sup>1</sup> The famous French writer, died at Paris in 1772.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> In 1806, owing to the losses sustained by Austria, which up to that time had been its head.

<sup>4</sup> King of Bavaria 1825-48, when he abdicated in favour of his son, Maximilian II; died at Nice in 1868.



tional institutions of the Jesuits were filled with the sons of the aristocracy. The future members of the Upper House were trained there, and in France nunneries again came into vogue as educational establishments for girls. Catholic piety, once more quickened into life, peopled anew many crumbling monastic walls, and founded fresh monasteries, especially with a view to charitable work. Nevertheless, there was a tendency to note in this something of an artificial and excited character, which was not thought likely to hold its ground against the storms, and still less against the silent troubles, of the time.

When friends of Lamennais<sup>1</sup> had purchased the old monastic buildings of Solesmes<sup>2</sup>, in order there to renew the learned retired life of the Benedictines of St. Maur<sup>3</sup>, they sent Chateaubriand<sup>4</sup> a diploma as an honorary member. The old man replied to Abbé Guéranger: 'I have just received your interesting letter, and hasten to tell you what great sympathy I entertain for your admirable undertaking, and how grateful I am to you. Like yourself, I, too, formerly had dreams of the restoration of the Benedictines. I desired to assign to the new congregation St. Denis<sup>5</sup>—St. Denis with its empty tombs and empty library—in the hope that the former would again be filled, and promising myself that my new Mabillons<sup>6</sup> would again fill the latter.

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> A village in the department of Sarthe, France, still possessed of its Benedictine abbey.

<sup>3</sup> The traditional founder and first abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St. Maur-sur-Loire, destroyed by the Normans in the ninth century. He died in 584.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 48.

<sup>5</sup> The Benedictine abbey (on the north side of Paris) was founded by Dagobert I in the seventh century.

<sup>6</sup> A noted French Benedictine scholar and historian, who spent much of his life at the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, Paris; died 1707.



Since you, Monsignor l'Abbé, are still young, you have luckier dreams than I; and since we are both Christians, permit us to labour in the anticipation of that eternity to which every day brings us nearer. There we shall find again our old Benedictines more learned than they were upon earth; for they were men as virtuous as scientifically trained, who will now, with a much wider outlook, take cognizance of the origin of things and the antiquities of the universe.' What a hopeless case then must that have been where Chateaubriand himself saw only a pious fancy! Lacordaire<sup>1</sup> who, shrinking in alarm from the bold flight and plunge of his master, as a spirited orator confined himself to the religious character which lay at the heart of Catholicism, placed the chief merit of his life in the fact that he exhibited again to the French in some examples the black and white cowls of St. Dominic. But the Superior of the Carmelites, Father Hyacinthe<sup>2</sup>, whose powerful voice, filling that same vaulted roof of Notre Dame, seemed to make Paris itself again to be Catholic, broke through the fetters (in 1869), inasmuch as he had found in the monastery only abortive attempts at saintliness, and took to himself a wife, without thereby rendering any particular aid to his moral effectiveness.

Moreover, the traveller through Catholic parts of Germany and France still constantly sees majestic old abbeys as fair princely castles, or perhaps the Church as an ivy-encircled ruin, and beside it the old monastery of famous reputation; but they are not turrets which crown its embattlements, but the lofty smoky

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> Otherwise known as Charles Loyson, the noted French preacher and denouncer of abuses in the Roman Church. For the Carmelites see p. 31.



chimneys of the factory. Clairvaux<sup>1</sup>, the monastery of St. Bernard, is a workhouse for roving beggars (*dépôt de mendicité*).

If the spirit of mediaevalism galvanized into life built certain new monasteries north of the Alps and Pyrenees, even within the precincts of Berlin, and if dismal stories came to light out of the secrecy of monastic walls, yet, where a nation gained the mastery of the State, monasteries were confiscated by hundreds, whether in order to punish the services they rendered to reaction, or because their crime consisted in the possession of wealth, and the governing power had need of it. Thus it was in the old monastic countries of Spain, Portugal, Mexico, and Italy. The historical spots themselves, which even the Protestant traveller trod with reverence, were not spared. In that rich work of art, the double church which covers the tomb of the Mendicant of Assisi<sup>2</sup>, there were in 1860 only five aged monks left, to creep round like ghosts, for the maintenance of the services. Monte Cassino<sup>3</sup> has with difficulty supported itself to the present time as a school and boarding institution. Everywhere the revolution raps at the monastery gate, and its knocking is not everywhere heard with alarm. The monks at Palermo<sup>4</sup> who stood on the barricades, and all the brown or

<sup>1</sup> A village in the department of Aube, France; St. Bernard (1115) was its first abbot. The monastery was rebuilt in the eighteenth century, and is uninteresting.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 267. The churches stand one above the other, and are abundantly adorned with pictures by Giotto and other famous masters, illustrating St. Francis's life and teaching.

<sup>3</sup> On a hill near Cassino, about forty-five miles NW. of Naples, with renowned school, library, and archives. It was founded in 529 by St. Benedict, and is the cradle of his order.

<sup>4</sup> Palermo, the Sicilian seaport, was the scene of an insurrection in 1820, was bombarded and reduced by the Bourbons in 1849, and revolted, receiving the troops of Garibaldi in 1860.



black cowls among the red shirts of Garibaldi's volunteers, may have thought how the cities which took sides against the Pope in the fourteenth century said flippantly that in any case liberty is to be preferred to salvation. In Rome itself the larger monasteries were to half their extent turned into barracks for the French defensive occupation. In the chief monastery of the Dominicans, on the site of the old Inquisition, there was heard from the monastic court, mingled with the monks' voices as they sang the offices, the roll of the drums and French words of command. Then, too, these monasteries succumbed to the Italian law, which however only deprived them of ownership and privilege without preventing a voluntary community of life. Whatever we may think of the State's abolition of monasteries—and certainly such may always be according to circumstances gentle or harsh, just or unjust—monastic fraternities, especially when briskly multiplied, have exercised so significant an influence upon the sentiment of the neighbourhood and on the collective cultivation of the land, that a well-ordered State will not readily dispense with its power to permit and supervise them. Even in a peaceful time (1838) the rich Swiss monastery of Pfeffers<sup>1</sup>, in full unanimity with the population of the Canton, resolved on its own extinction and became an asylum for the insane, although at Rome the act was called suicidal. So, too, there permeates Catholic nations a feeling that monasticism is not a serving of God, and isolated efforts, as they take actual shape, sometimes in greater sometimes in less number, will scarcely exorcize a fate which for a century has been settling down over monasteries.

<sup>1</sup> In the Canton of St. Gall, noted for its hot springs and its romantic gorge.



We have already mentioned<sup>1</sup> the popular tale which the Countess Hahn-Hahn wrote in her clever style to recommend and glorify the monastic life. A young woman of good family in Maine, brought up by the Ladies of the Sacred Heart in Alsace, who understand so well how to combine the sweet tone of devotion with regard for the refinements of social life, on the occasion of her first Communion secretly betrothed herself to the heavenly bridegroom and thereby to the convent. With unbounded nobility of soul she carries her point against all the dissuasives which circumstances furnish, and at last even against her own heart, and what is the result? While natural family relationships offering her happiness invite her as favoured by fortune to establish herself as a type of the life which shall combine the patriarchal and the aristocratic, she drives in confusion all that is dear to her into unnatural paths. The end is the murder of her brother, suicide, and the extinction of this noble family. The only thing wanting is that the property should be devised to the Order of Jesuits. This admonition however is as early as the primitive Church, that every sacred bond of nature is severed at the monastery gate, even if you should have to step over the body of your own father; for there ruthlessness is piety.

More powerful as a defence and eulogy, although disavowing both, is the *History of the Monks of the West* by Montalembert<sup>2</sup>, the chivalrous defender of the Roman Church as well as of national liberty. That we may behold in the inmates of the monasteries the ideal of Christian manhood, he chose the golden age of monasticism onwards from St. Benedict, the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 187.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 105.



founder of the Monastic Rule of the West, up to the highest point of its development, St. Bernard, who from his retirement at Clairvaux<sup>1</sup> all day long poured forth the loftiest and most glowing aspirations. The distinguished historian desired with absolute impartiality to cloak no failing on the part of his heroes, and to conceal none of their glories. Also his desire is to draw everything direct from the sources. Among those sources must be reckoned the heart and imagination of him who, twenty years previously, in the *Life of St. Elizabeth*<sup>2</sup> presented us with the Christian poetry of suffering and of compassion. When compared with his talent for making the glories of the Middle Ages attractive to the modern taste, and perhaps through the very existence of that talent, the investigation as to whether facts are sufficiently attested is not his strong point. Here also he found in the 'Dialogues of the holy Pope Gregory the Great' the most authentic source for the biography of St. Benedict. Gregory I<sup>3</sup> was a great Pope, but not a trustworthy historian. His credulous attitude towards every marvellous story, which some monk or other or an old woman related to him, permits only the most cautious use of his edifying narrative. Of St. Benedict he has related nothing but a string of miracles, with an appeal, it is true, to four whom he terms his disciples; but the legend took shape, as might be expected, in the course of half a century amid the surroundings of the monastic imagination. From this source for marvels Montalembert in a spirit of faith borrowed narratives in which the old laws of nature

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Montalembert's *Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary* was published in 1836.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 30.



are reversed. And yet with illogical arbitrariness he has made many concessions to modern habits of thought in the way of softenings off and omissions of the miraculous. He relates that St. Maur<sup>1</sup> at the bidding of St. Benedict walked upon the lake near Subiaco<sup>2</sup>, as upon hard sand, to rescue a boy who had fallen into the water. Gregory related that St. Benedict in his cell perceived the boy's danger and summoned St. Maur, and that, after he had asked for and received the saint's blessing, he ran out upon the lake, like St. Peter, after the boy, whom the water had carried away the length of an arrow-shot, under the impression that it was dry land. The full extent of the miracle first appears, if we notice that there was at least a quarter of an hour needed to proceed from that cell to the deep valley, where at that time the Anio formed a lake. Therefore either St. Maur flew down there, or the boy floated for this length of time upon the water. Examples of the miracles which Montalembert omits to mention are that a stone which the masons could not lift was drawn up by the prayer of St. Benedict, and that a discontented monk, who was deserting the monastery, was frightened into returning by a dragon that sought to swallow him. In the most rationalistic manner he tells how a wicked priest sought in vain to poison St. Benedict, that the saint examined the poisoned bread that had been sent him, and that at his command a raven carried it to a place where it could injure no one. Moreover, the modern teller of legends did not know or set aside a tale which yet would have suited particularly his taste and belief. It may be historical that St. Benedict rolled himself naked upon thorns, in order to blot out the memory of a beautiful

<sup>1</sup> See p. 60.

<sup>2</sup> A town thirty-three miles E. of Rome.



woman which he had brought with him from Rome, and which in his rocky cliff at Subiaco the evil one in his hostility held temptingly before him. Montalembert relates that the little rose garden, which is now shown on this spot, springs from two rose plants, which seven hundred years afterwards St. Francis of Assisi planted here, when he visited this battle-field of the spirit in its conflict with sensuality. A different account was once given me by the old Benedictine, who led me out of the gloomy monastery church through a little door to the sunny projection of rock. 'Look,' he cried, 'these are the thorns which when sprinkled with the blood of St. Benedict turned into roses!' It is difficult to refuse credence to such blooming proofs, and this botanical transformation by means of the blood of the youthful saint rescuing himself from his sensuality is graceful enough; while, according to the further account of that guide, there still attaches to it something of a materialistic element, namely, that the women of the neighbourhood make use of these roses in cases of need to procure fecundity.

The old monastic records furnish rich material for translation into Montalembert's lively eloquence of diction, and his prolonged Introduction is a glorification of monasticism as the perfection of all Christian life. 'He who believes in the Incarnation of the Son of God and in the Divine character of the Gospel, must recognize in monastic life the noblest attempt which has ever been taken in hand to fight against the fallen nature and approach Christian perfectibility. Every Christian who believes in the imperishable character of the Church must, in spite of all scandals and all abuses, recognize and honour in this institution the imperishable seed of a priestly spirit of devotion.'



Truly such a history of monasticism, and from France too, belongs to the signs of this time ; but yet there is a kind of ring through it as of a funeral oration over an illustrious deceased.

Speakers in defence of monasteries have often defended them as sanctuaries for sorrowing, broken spirits, weary of the world. 'There are places,' wrote Chateaubriand, 'for the cure of the body. Well then, permit religion, too, to have a place for the cure of souls, whose ailments are more painful, more protracted, and more difficult to heal.' Montalembert rejoins : 'This representation is poetical and touching, but it is not true. Monasteries were by no means intended to receive the invalids of the world. It was not the ailing souls, on the contrary it was the most healthy and vigorous that the human race has ever produced, which knocked in a crowd at the monastery gates. Monastic life, far from being the refuge of the weak, was the battle ground of the strong.' History must give its verdict in favour of both spokesmen on the Catholic side, differing though they did in the degree of encouragement given by them to the life which was in accordance with the fashion of their day. It has to do the same with regard to the more comprehensive watchword : 'Monasteries must exist for great virtues, for great crimes, and for great misfortunes.' So many examples are to be seen of penitents and persons shipwrecked in the storm of secular life, even to de-throned kings and deserted women, that this inducement to populate monasteries cannot be set aside. But we know also of enthusiastic young men, who felt themselves inwardly drawn to the monastery, that they were already by nature monks. Side by side with them, boys, either through an apt piety on the



part of their parents, or through the care of these for the heritage of the elder sons, were not unfrequently brought to the monastery, and that secretly, before they had acquired a knowledge of the joys of the world and of its duties.

The man who desires to deny the great significance of monastic life in religion as well as in the progress of civilization must understand little of history. These monks did not merely pray and fast. They reclaimed in the Middle Ages waste stretches of country. They built churches in skilful fashion with their own hands. They taught the people and converted them to Christianity. They rescued the treasures of antiquity, Christian as well as pagan, by the copies which they made; and when there was no longer need of these, they published as the result of their joint efforts important original authorities and historical works, although they almost always wrote histories solely with a view to their convent. They maintained throughout the whole Order the same controversial tendency as a heritage from generation to generation, and the Orders long carried on among each other bitter conflicts upon idle or at least incomprehensible matters. But also with regard to the small circumstances of everyday life we look still upon many districts where the monastery which now stands deserted, in ruins or secularized, formed the central feature of the neighbourhood; the scene presented by the surroundings and the architecture furnishing merely a symbol of the importance of the position held by the community in former days. The educated classes found here suitable entertainment, the poor black-bread soup, the traveller a hospitable shelter, children instruction, youth counsel, perhaps also assistance in the needs that troubled them. An Italian



proverb says: 'No bad or good thing happens in which there is not involved a *Fra* (a mendicant friar).' Such figures of the guardian angel order as good Father Lorenzo in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, or as Christoforo, the gentle Capucine, in Manzoni's *Promessi Sposi*<sup>1</sup>, are taken from actual life.

Beside the many known by name, who from the very fact that their home was a monastery found opportunity to develop their gifts in a beneficent direction and turn them to good account, there stands certainly a nameless multitude, for every unit thousands of ciphers, from whom only an occasional sigh or misdeed has made its way out of the confinement into the world. If it were possible to gather into one picture all the hearts which have been broken in monastic cells, and still more all that have been withered away by petty monastic interests, all the lustful dreams and fancies, all the crimes against nature which have taken place behind monastery walls or have originated there, there would be a terrible tragedy presented to our view.

When on one occasion in the first French National Assembly a question was raised whether monastic vows were in consonance with the spirit of Christianity, there arose a hostile demonstration on the part of the deputies who held ecclesiastical positions. Why should Christianity not give free scope to this form of piety as well? We should remember that to Catholicism with its piety as exhibited in action it can only appear simply as something specially privileged. For it is recognized that value is only attributed in the sight of God to the pious disposition, out of which, ever in

<sup>1</sup> *I Promessi Sposi* (The Betrothed Lovers), an historical novel written about 1826 by Manzoni, the chief of the Italian romantic school; d. 1873.



accordance with strength and opportunity, there are carried into effect suitable works done in conformity with duty. It is recognized that in this way dwellers in the world can live with piety at least equal to that of the inmates of the cloister; in fact, that by the provision of monasteries and by monastic vows more sacred duties imposed by God upon the individual, as arising out of his talents and circumstance, are not unfrequently neglected. There will still be no lack of persons to endow monasteries and to enter them. There is an old proverb which says: 'Leave monasteries and nuns to themselves; care for thine own.' The whole ethical position of retirement from the world, as the rule of a sincere monastic life which places an irreconcilable severance between flesh and spirit, instead of transfiguring and rendering beautiful the sensual nature by the compelling power of the spirit, represents after all only an inferior degree of morality. Moreover, the importance of monasteries in the direction of civilization is, to a large extent, relegated to the past. The reclaiming and cultivation of land is no longer an affair of the monks. The hospitality of monasteries is still demanded as a necessity by the traveller in semi-barbarous countries only. The printing press takes the place of the copyist. The last Benedictine of the learned Order of St. Maur entered the Institute of France. The editing, and indeed critical editing, of important original authorities is the outcome of academies and independent associations of learned men. 'The sacred love of country is our motive force,' so runs the motto of the edition of the original sources of German history. Missionaries are not lacking to the Protestant Church, and it is from the Protestant independent missionary societies



that the Catholic Church has successfully learned how to secure inexhaustible supplies for sending them out. For higher as for elementary schools the monk is no longer needed, and, apart from the merits of individuals, there has passed over into the universal consciousness a view expressed formerly by Barnave<sup>1</sup> in the French National Assembly in these words: 'Ye have sanctioned a solemn declaration of the rights of man, but there is no Order which, by means of its vows and its rule, has not set these rights at naught. Ye desire free citizens; but all monks are slaves. Ye desire citizens who are subject only to the nation, the law, and the king; but monks are subject to foreign rulers whose interests are for the most part opposed to ours. There is a disposition to counsel us to retain them for the sake of public education; but can it be wise to entrust the training of our future citizens to men who are external to all family, civilian, and political relationships? or is it not rather most unnatural to choose those who are to teach truth to our young people from a class of men who have dispensed with the use of reason, at least with its independent use? In truth, even if the dissolution of the monasteries were to cost us money instead of bringing us in some, we ought not to hesitate on the point, for it would be unworthy of this Assembly to consider it simply as a financial operation, since politics and ethics have a yet greater bearing upon it.'

Thus the Orders survive merely for pious deeds of charity, as in particular they have been carried on by sisters of mercy, unweariedly and in defiance of death,

<sup>1</sup> Antoine Pierre Joseph Marie Barnave, a French revolutionist and orator. He was president of the National Assembly in 1790, but was arrested on a charge of treason in 1792, and guillotined the following year.



on fields of battle and in hospitals. Protestantism without hesitation adopted the same agencies for itself in various forms, and has its deaconesses, who, originating in the little summer-house at Kaiserswerth<sup>1</sup>, have spread already as far as the Nile and the Ohio. In spite, however, of their devoted services, they have not yet won general confidence on account of their bearing something of a party complexion. On the other hand, there are many unpleasant things said of the Catholic sisters, both in respect of their fanaticism and of their prudery as to certain ailments. It is even said that, devoid of compassion, they are more interested in their own well-being than in the sick. In any case, heroic deeds of compassionate devotion are not confined to an Order constituted with vows of perpetual obligation, although Perrone, in his latest work upon the God-head of Christ<sup>2</sup>, affirmed that *our* sisters of mercy without vows had nothing in their purpose except to catch a husband among the sick or their attendants. When Elizabeth Fry<sup>3</sup> forced her way with Christian aid into the God-forsaken and God-blaspheming English prisons, when Amalie Sieveking<sup>4</sup> took into her keeping all that was deserted in Hamburg, when Miss Nightingale<sup>5</sup> appeared, as though God's angel, in the pestilential lazarettos of the Crimea, they were all three bound by no vows except in their own Protestant hearts. How many of the sisters of mercy belonging to the

<sup>1</sup> On the Rhine, twenty-seven miles NNW. of Cologne. The institution here referred to was founded in 1836 by Fliedner, a German pastor and philanthropist; d. 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Rome, 1870, iii. 113. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Elizabeth Gurney Fry, philanthropist and prison reformer; d. 1845.

<sup>4</sup> She founded a women's union for the care of the poor and sick; died at Hamburg, 1859.

<sup>5</sup> Florence Nightingale, celebrated for her noble services in the hospitals at Scutari during the Crimean War 1854-6.



monasteries in Vienna, Prague, or Mainz have done such deeds?

The vow of an Order involves the counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience, that is to say, voluntary poverty, the renunciation of all sexual relations, and unconditional obedience to the heads of the Order. One must be dead as a corpse with regard to one's own will, in pursuance of a self-imposed obligation which, according to the Catholic view, cannot be broken without grievous sin. To make a vow for the fulfilment of some kind of wish or for deliverance from danger is a ready resource for the natural man. It is an old custom dating from heathen days, and based upon the thought that the gods, in consideration of being promised what they desire, are moved to grant our supplication. Not unfrequently, too, vows were made chiefly at the expense of others; from the case of Jephthah's daughter<sup>1</sup> down to the man who has vowed his daughter to the cloister and so entangled himself in his own superstition. A vow may well pass muster as a means of self-discipline, if any one, as though by the help of his better self exhibited in an hour of exaltation, desires merely to compel himself in contravention of his own weakness to do that which is above all things right and good for him to do. Also it must pass muster, if it is made in the best interests of another, and has been freely accepted by him, and has a definite bearing upon his resolutions. On the other hand, vows of perpetual obligation are unprofitable or immoral—unprofitable if the resolution arises out of an inherent necessity so obvious that every morning of life in a monastery, however long that life might be, it would have to be independently made afresh; immoral,

<sup>1</sup> Judges xi. 30 ff.



if it be only that a temporary frame of mind, wounded or over excited, even though it may continue for the length of a year, presumes to forge its fetters for the whole future life. No one is justified in renouncing the freedom which God has bestowed upon him, and, forestalling the leadings of Providence, to pledge in such a fashion his future yet unknown to him, or actually the life of another person who is dear to him. Even after the reform instituted by the Council of Trent a vow can be taken after the completion of the sixteenth year. A girl can put on the habit of the Order as early as the completion of her twelfth year; and this resolution of the Council was passed 'in its care for the freedom of the pledge taken by young women who were to be dedicated to God'. At such an age where is the security for the ripeness of a resolution taken for a lifetime and antagonistic to nature? For monastic vows involve the precise opposite of that which becomes naturally a freeborn man. He is bound, if he can consistently with honour, to acquire or inherit such an amount that, without being chargeable to any one, he may possess the means to carry on an active life in consonance with his ability. He is bound, if no undeserved fate intervenes, to complete his life by marriage, and to live again in his descendants, and he is bound, yielding submission only to God speaking through his conscience and to the law of the State, to be to the fullest possible extent free and independent (*sui iuris*) in the discharge of the duties incumbent upon him.

The monastic vow demands the converse of all this. A brotherhood which is Christian, and thus pre-eminently bound to morality, can therefore by no means accept with a good conscience such a vow.



Still less can a State, which desires to be independent and just, apply its authority to enforce its fulfilment. Rather is it its duty to employ this strength against every spiritual community, as soon as it avails itself of other than spiritual means to hold in bondage those who are entangled in a monastic vow against their altered convictions—a thing which is not unfrequently reported to be the case even in modern times in countries where the report is ventured at all.

From time to time also in the Middle Ages the dissolution of a monastic vow was a pressing necessity which affected important interests. Then in cases where sufficient support of an influential character was forthcoming—as a rule not cheaply purchased—a papal dispensation was obtained. It appeared reasonable that a vow made to God should only be dissolved by God's Viceroy. He can no more claim that character, so far as he fulfils it conscientiously, than every other person who in any way is carrying out God's business upon earth, in some wide sphere of activity through God's grace, or even in the most insignificant matters appertaining to his own home and heart. Thus, if in thy youth, or in some other way, in thoughtless fashion—it may even have been in the most noble enthusiasm—thou hast vowed thyself to the cloister, and if thy conviction, owing to an advance in the direction of Christian perfection and thy destiny as willed by God, has been altered, the inherent rectitude of this change ought certainly, like every variation in one's calling, attended as it always is with pain, to be submitted to the most strict testing process as in the sight of God; but this done, thou mayst with confidence as thine own Pope administer to thyself a dispensation, and let the summit of the growing tree of thy life break through the low



monastic roof, against which it has thrust itself stiffly and with painfully stunting effect.

Nevertheless there may always be some who are born for this, estranged from all secular business so as simply to live in prayerful communion with God and in yearning for the things beyond; although this frame of mind is seldom found apart from a monastic bringing up, and it is precisely the monastery which maintains, only in a very contracted fashion, this solitary communion of a man with God alone and with his own heart. We may add others who have been bereaved by a painful fate and are dedicated to the cloister; in particular, women. It would be unfair, and was unfair, not to reserve some monasteries, founded by the piety of our forbears, for such exceptional individuals. But for such monkish folk, so born or taken by their destiny out of the world and dedicated, the monastery gates ought to stand wide open, permitting egress. The dungeon which held vows of perpetuity had already fulfilled its purpose in the world's history when it was burst open by the bold monk who, while undergoing the strictest monastic discipline, had experienced in himself the unsatisfying character of all works of supererogation, and while in bondage to them had adopted the Gospel of Christian freedom.

### C. Saints.

A long procession of saints has emerged from the cloister, but they belong to an earlier date, and are the heroes of the Church. Their adoration is of popular origin, inasmuch as the memory of one held in affection, who died as a martyr for Christ, was considered sacred in his community, and if he was a bishop of repute, or otherwise adapted to draw the



general attention, larger circles shared this memory, like that of the proto-martyr, whose stoning and glorifying are set forth with loving emphasis in the Acts of the Apostles. As early as the heroic times of the persecution of the Church many communities annually, on the 'birthday' of such and such a distinguished confessor, that is to say, the day on which by his heroic death he entered upon the higher life, kept a joyful celebration at his tomb. Then when the Church had ascended the throne of the Roman Empire, in its condition of peaceful possession those who by their blood had purchased the victory stood out in so much the more glorious relief. Hitherto the sacrifice had been offered and prayer made *on their behalf* as though still present members of the community<sup>1</sup>. Now prayers were addressed *to* them, with conscious reference to the earlier custom<sup>2</sup>. Many of them had in their lifetime exercised the power of forgiving sins, inasmuch as on their way to death they had celebrated the Lord's Supper with fallen persons, i.e. with those who by the denial of Christ had saved their miserable lives, and, for this reason thrust out of the Church, were yet unwilling to be cast off by her. As the martyrs were overtopped by Biblical personages, the friends of God in the Old Testament and the Apostles, so there were gradually placed alongside of them such as by exceptional virtues or renunciations impressed the popular mind, founders of churches and of Orders and pious Church teachers, who lived on with posterity, the former through their institutions, the latter through their writings. Their figures as Christian ideals took the places not so much of the deified as of the historically idealized men of Greek and Roman antiquity,

<sup>1</sup> See *Constit. Apost.* viii. 12. [H.]    <sup>2</sup> See St. Aug. *Sermo* 69. [H.]



under whose influence youth had been trained up in former days.

It was the Christian people that created this body of saints, just as it is the people in their mysterious unconscious power who have bestowed upon a prince the sobriquet of Great or less frequently of Good, if it is worthy to be attached. With such a method of canonization there could not be lacking somewhat of an element of uncertainty, viz. that a saint might be venerated whose name posterity has forgotten, or who had never lived at all. Thus it was probably out of an allegory that the ingenious legend of St. Christopher arose, who, in accordance with the aim of all genuine piety, desires to serve only that which is highest, and so first serves the emperor, then the devil, and when the latter shows alarm at the sight of a cross, Christ alone. As we can for the most part do service to Him only in doing it to the poor, the powerful giant made himself a carrier who should bear travellers upon his shoulders over a rapid stream. When on one occasion in the grey of dawn he was bearing a little child across, and in mid stream said with a sigh: 'Can it be really only a child and yet feel to me as heavy as if I were carrying the whole world?' the child said, 'Thou art bearing One Who is the Lord of the world,' and bestowed upon him Holy Baptism. According to the older legend Christopher went on preaching Christ and wrought many miracles before he died a martyr's death. It was only the later version which cut off the miraculous element and the martyrdom and realized the right conclusion, viz. that the saint forthwith after his Baptism, in consequence of the precious burden which he had carried, died upon the bank, and the painter's art added the symbolic feature,



as Memling has so beautifully represented it<sup>1</sup>, that at the moment of Baptism, in the background of the rocky valley through which the stream rushes, the sun is rising. The name Christopher means a bearer of Christ. The designation holds a very important place in the letters and acts of martyrdom of St. Ignatius<sup>2</sup>, who expresses the desire that each believer should be a Christopher, and in the presence of the emperor glorified in bearing Christ in his heart. There is plainly genuine poetry in this spiritual bearing of Christ in the heart as the highest of all Lords—a bearing that brings with it death and the highest form of life—thus given an external form in the legend of St. Christopher, which has come to be a truth, even though the arm-bone of this saintly giant, which used to be exhibited in Venice, be of still greater antiquity as belonging to an antediluvian animal. The historical existence of the knight St. George<sup>3</sup>, who chokes the dragon, or, according to the poem, the hell-hound, may be left undecided, but it is certain that he became a noble symbol for the victory of Christianity over heathenism.

Charles the Great, who had but little taste for the veneration of saints, nevertheless gave occasion for one to originate, inasmuch as on the battle-field where he conquered the Saxons<sup>4</sup> he erected a chapel as a thank-offering for saintly help from above (*Sancti Ad-*

<sup>1</sup> In the central picture of a triptych in the Museum at Bruges.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 154.

<sup>3</sup> Traditionally the patron saint of England, a military tribune of Cappadocia and martyr at Nicomedia in the persecutions of Christians under the Emperor Diocletian in 303. He was said to have appeared in aid of the Crusaders against the Saracens at Antioch in 1089. He has been by some identified, but on insufficient grounds, with an Arian intruding bishop of Alexandria, 356-61.

<sup>4</sup> At Paderborn in Westphalia in 772. For Charles see vol. i. p. 365.



*iutorii*). The Low German people called such a chapel St. Help's Church, and so made themselves thence a Saint Help! The multiplication of saints to the extent of whole crowds arose from misunderstandings of legends like the Theban legion<sup>1</sup>, which, with its commander Mauritius, let itself be slaughtered at St. Maurice for refusing to offer sacrifice to idols, and the 11,000 virgins, who died with St. Ursula<sup>2</sup> before Cologne that they might retain their virginity. In their company appears also a saintly Pope, St. Cyriac, as dying along with them a martyr's death, although he never lived; and posterity doubted whether it was from devotion that he renounced his exalted office, or in order to amuse himself with these young women. The artlessness of the people in the south of France is shown in the tale of the dog, who protects his master's sleeping child in the wood against a great serpent. After he had slain it and stretched himself bleeding from his wounds upon the child, the father on his arrival took the dog to be the murderer of his child, and slew him in sudden passion. They made him under the name of St. Winifred to be a martyr and children's saint, who is specially invoked by mothers on behalf of weakly children<sup>3</sup>.

It is, however, for the most part as built upon a

<sup>1</sup> The legend is that a legion (6,666 in number) drawn from the Thebais in Egypt, and summoned by the Emperor Maximian (286-305, 306-8) to his aid, when called upon to swear allegiance with the usual heathen ceremonies refused, and were put to death with their commander Mauritius at Agaunum (St. Maurice in the canton of Valais, Switzerland).

<sup>2</sup> A British saint, said to have been put to death by an army of Huns. It has been suggested that the '11,000' is a misunderstanding arising from *Undecimilla* as a proper name.

<sup>3</sup> Compare the well-known Welsh tradition of Gelert, the faithful hound of Llewelyn (d. 1282), from which Beddgelert (with its monument), N. Wales, takes its name.



basis of history, that saintly legend has come to be a Catholic mythology, partly through folklore which aims at idealization and yearns to contemplate Christian ideals in material shape, partly owing to hierarchical designs, partly through the play of poetic fancy, but always with the desire to break through the prose of everyday life by the help of the poetry of the marvellous. Of this sort are the *Fioretti di San Francesco*, a chaplet of flowers, grown in more than one spring, and with sweetness and wonderful poetic charm woven together to form the glory of the saintly mendicant. It would be as foolish to desire to explain the miraculous element in these on natural principles, as to desire to set it forth as historical.

When the need presented itself for bringing canonization under definite regulations and securing universal recognition for the individuals thereby distinguished, the Roman Curia was the natural Western authority for this purpose. Since the tenth century it first created them individually, just as the demand was from time to time brought before its notice. Then from the twelfth century onwards this was done as the exclusive right of the Pope, upon which, however, the reforming Councils of the fifteenth century encroached. It appeared to be a part of the supreme powers of the Pope, that as by means of indulgences he holds sway over Purgatory, so by means of canonization over heaven, the latter specially appertaining, as it does, to the gate-keeper of heaven. The Popes who bear the title of sanctity only during their temporal existence have, nevertheless, been very moderate in the use of their power in reference to their predecessors in office, with the exception of the martyred Popes, who, however, came to be saints spontaneously. Only a few Popes,



and they truly pious churchmen, have been canonized, and among them none of the great successors of St. Peter holding world-wide rule. Gregory VII<sup>1</sup>, it is true, is here and there venerated as a saint, especially in the place of his burial at Salerno<sup>2</sup>, near the supposed tomb of the apostolic tax-gatherer; but when Benedict XIII<sup>3</sup> announced the formal canonization 'of the Pope and Confessor, Gregory', with the accustomed liturgy, this decree was thereupon in most Catholic countries deemed to be an invitation to revolt against the lawful Princes, and so was not accepted, for it was regarded as the canonization not of a person but of a ruler. Therefore, unrecognized by princes and peoples, Gregory, whom the first of his name had also by anticipation deprived of the well-earned title of Great, remained a dubious saint.

Roman canonization gradually acquired very elaborate forms as regards its process. A living person is never canonized, nor again does this ever take place in the excitement of reverent affection shortly after his decease. The proofs of the merits of the candidates are elaborately tested. In this way, of course, the impartiality, which is supplied by the remoteness of the time of his life, is counterbalanced by the impossibility of examining contemporaries as witnesses to that life. Moreover, a legally constituted opponent of the canonization is not lacking, popularly known as the devil's advocate. In case canonization does not yet appear to be sufficiently justified, beatification precedes it. The original popular element is in most cases still taken into account in this way, that the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 169.

<sup>2</sup> A seaport on the gulf of that name, Italy. Gregory's and St. Matthew's tombs are pointed out in the cathedral, which is dedicated to the Apostle.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 36.



investigation concerns itself also with the question, whether in the home and in the former sphere of operations of the future saint the desire for his recognition is great, and in fact his adoration already an established thing. This was the case with John of Nepomuk, the saint of bridges and of the seal of confession<sup>1</sup>, already for almost a century venerated as the patron of Bohemia, which was restored to Catholicism by the 'booted beatifier'<sup>2</sup>. There was a further unconscious confusion between him and the martyr Johann Hus<sup>3</sup>, until at last (1729) he was canonized. Sometimes they also came near to canonizing such as subsequently were found to be heretics, very pious heretics, *bien entendu*; but through the strictness of the process employed this has always been brought to light in good time. It is only the witty ingenuity of Boccaccio<sup>4</sup> that relates how an arrant knave in a foreign country, who saw his end approaching, made a last jest for himself, in order, by means of a hypocritical confession and the semblance of a devout death, to be buried as a saint. The judgement of Catholic nations is certainly divided with regard to some persons, such as Raymund Lully<sup>5</sup> and Savonarola<sup>6</sup>, whether they are to be regarded as saints or as heretics. The canonization of bishop Palafox<sup>7</sup> was at one time as good as resolved upon. The Jesuits

<sup>1</sup> He is said to have been flung from the Karls-brücke in Prague in 1383 (? 1393), by order of the emperor Wenzel (Wenceslaus), for refusing to betray what the empress had confided to him in the confessional.

<sup>2</sup> Referring to outrages connected with the Thirty Years' War. See vol. i. p. 193.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. i. p. 236.

<sup>5</sup> A Spanish scholastic and alchemist, missionary to the Mohammedans in Asia and Africa; d. 1315.

<sup>6</sup> See vol. i. p. 104.

<sup>7</sup> Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, a Spanish bishop of Puebla, Mexico; d. 1659.



opposed it with great energy. He had written against them. Nicholas von der Flüe<sup>1</sup>, who quite bears the character of a mediaeval popular saint, although he was reported not to have lived upon mountain air alone, has up to this time not succeeded in attaining to canonization. A pair of trustworthy miracles are still being sought for in Obwalden<sup>2</sup> for him. The expense might perhaps be met in a wooded region. For the process of canonization certainly costs more than graduation as a doctor; but the providing of this large expense is itself a valid proof of the interest which a family, a corporate body, a town, a province take in the recognition of their candidate, and so in his worship. If finally all is arranged, the ceremony of canonization is carried out in St. Peter's. Pictures are set up to make known the meritorious deeds of the new aristocrat of heaven, the legend of his life is read out, the Pope himself celebrates mass at the high altar, and he for whom hitherto prayer has been made is for the first time invoked by the Viceroy of Christ: '*Sancte N. N., ora pro nobis!*'

In a Pope who ventures from time to time to look forth over the august limitations of his office, and perhaps gives even one thought to the apotheosis of the ancient Caesars in this spot, it may produce a strange feeling to believe that his utterance, conditioned as it is by such various intervening human agencies, has the power actually to bring about an accession of rank in the realm of the blessed; and, on the other hand, that this does not take place, if a

<sup>1</sup> He is said, but erroneously, to have appeared personally at the Diet of Stanz (canton of Unterwalden) and prevented a disastrous political conflict. He did, however, assist towards this end. He was beatified by Clement X in 1671.

<sup>2</sup> A section of Unterwalden.



canonization contemplated at Rome is prevented on grounds connected with foreign politics, e.g. that of Bellarmine through the opposition of the crowns of France and Spain. It amounts to this, that, where Christ's Viceroy is in favour of action, our Lord is trammelled by regard to the Spanish cabinet in the composition of His heavenly court. For the saintly host are considered as such, surrounding the God-Man and His Virgin Mother in the celestial Paradise, interceding for their favourites and patrons who furnish helpful protection in their necessities, destined one day to be the brilliant retinue, each in the individual form given him in the legend of his earthly existence, when Christ returns to judge the world. It is said of the learned and jovial Pope Benedict XIV<sup>1</sup>, who has composed a work in many sections and of scientific importance upon the canonization of the servants of God, that in his last illness he placed upon his wasted limb the picture of a man, whose canonization was at that time on the tapis, and said: 'If thou doest good to me, I will do so to thee. If thou curest me, I am prepared to canonize thee!'

It is, however, difficult for us to imagine that, on the occasion of the great batch of canonizations at Whitsuntide, 1862, some slight considerations of this kind did not cross the mind of Pius IX. The twenty-six Japanese saints died in 1597. Since that time, almost forgotten upon earth, they lived on quietly in Paradise among the innumerable host of other martyrs, who have not attained to the honour of canonization. As there was by chance extant an edifying description of their martyrdom by one who stood by—for subsequent to this time thousands of nameless persons died in

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 100.



Japan for the cause of Christ—on this ground the Franciscans as early as the time of Urban VIII<sup>1</sup> urged the canonization of the martyrs of their Order. Further, in 1627, they obtained from him the right to a mass on the day of their deaths (February 5), but then this matter stood over. That now it was resuscitated was either a happy chance, in order, at this time of need, to make an impression by means of a great Church festival, and to employ the Pope in a manner consonant with his taste, or was again the outcome of the Franciscans, who became liable to apply 52,000 Roman dollars out of their mendicant chest to revive the splendour of their Order by means of this crowd of twenty-three new saints. It had been already determined to gratify them when it occurred to the Jesuits that they too must take this opportunity of obtaining some saints, and three Japanese of their Order, who had shared in this great sacrifice of life, were granted to them as well. Among a second crowd of hitherto unappreciated saints Pius, in 1867, also canonized the judge of heretics, Don Pedro Arbues<sup>2</sup>, who had been murdered by avengers of blood and desperate men, after he had handed over to the scaffold hundreds of proselytes from Judaism, who were found guilty of attachment to the religion of their fathers. It was a canonization of the Inquisition.

There is always an element of greatness in dying for one's faith. The sacrifice in Japan, however, was not voluntary in the case of all. There were among them a few meritorious missionaries, but the majority were newly baptized natives, admitted on their road to death

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> A Spanish Augustinian monk, appointed by Ferdinand and Isabella, under Torquemada, their grand-inquisitor, as inquisitor for Aragon in 1484, and murdered at the altar in the following year.



among the tertiaries of the mendicant Order; persons concerning the state of whose souls little has been transmitted to us, while their names, uncouth of sound, which have not all been transmitted with equal fidelity, could hardly be much invoked by European tongues. Among them were three boys, servers at the mass. Of one of them only is an individual trait recorded, viz. that when he was come to the common place of execution he cried out, 'Where is my cross?'—this was the name given to the stakes to which the condemned were bound, in order to be thrust through with spears—and he joyfully embraced it. Also there was a man standing by, who was not on the list of those arrested, but when another of the same name was not at once forthcoming, offered himself in his place, inasmuch as he, too, was called Matthias—a thrusting of oneself upon death which the old Church teachers did not countenance. Whether therefore there existed in the hearts of all these martyrs that holy purity, which the Church as a rule requires for canonization, is a matter which, after all the secret consistories held for the purpose of inquiry, is likely to have remained as unknown to the Holy Father as to ourselves. To him it appeared specially comforting in this troublous time to multiply intercessors in heaven. This, too, was the judgement which the bishops expressed in their Whitsuntide address to the Pope with reference to the new saints: 'They must now in a new fashion take the guardianship of the Church in hand, and at their altars on high will offer their first prayer for thee.'

Is this then mere declamation, or is it a serious belief held by an educated man of the nineteenth century that men who had died hundreds of years



before and perhaps were very insignificant, merely because the Pope had them enrolled in the register of saints are at once taken up into the highest court circle of heaven, and gratefully become powerful intercessors on behalf of their afflicted patron upon earth? Had not the Japanese embassy, which at that very time was travelling through Europe and contemplating its culture without sign of astonishment, some right to smile at European superstition, if the sudden elevation in celestial rank of their formerly executed countrymen was explained to them?

Another representation appears more modest, viz. that the elevation of rank in heaven has taken place already, and that it is merely its recognition which is carried out upon earth. In this case, however, there always arises the consideration whether Pius IX received absolutely certain information of this celestial occurrence, which Urban VIII at any rate had not yet had. This canonization then has been carried out according to the traditional method, in such a way as though first human deliberation and Divine revelation upon the matter were expected as a preliminary. The bishops of Catholic Christendom were summoned to Rome, in order to advise the Holy Father upon the subject through their wisdom. The clergy and people of Rome were called upon, with the promise of rich indulgences from the treasures of the Church, by diligently taking their part in the prescribed public prayers and processions, to implore on behalf of his Holiness the fullness of celestial light for the great act of impending canonization. On the occasion of the ceremony itself, at the twice repeated prayer of the 'Cardinal Promoter' before the Pope's throne that those referred to should be added to the list of the



saints of our Lord Jesus Christ, the reply is heard : ' Their merits and virtues are indeed well known, but in order to decide so weighty a matter the assistance of heaven and the light of the Holy Spirit is first to be invoked.' After the singing of the Litany of the Saints, and following upon the third urgent prayer (*instante*, *instantius*, *et instantissime*), there ensues the declaration that his Holiness, through the operation of a beam of Divine light, has at length determined upon complying with the request. But all this is merely ceremonial. The resolution was taken long before, and in fact was solemnly announced by the Pope as early as the Feast of the Annunciation. Therefore we are less able to believe that the bishops were summoned for the sake of the Japanese, than that the Japanese were canonized in order, amid the perils of this time, to assemble the bishops at Rome for an impressive manifestation, which in secular language is termed a demonstration <sup>1</sup>.

In the case we are considering there was one requisite altogether lacking to a regular canonization—security for the cult of the new saints in their own country. At all events the Japanese must first be made Christians, and, apart from English and American missionaries, Catholics, in order to produce persons to venerate their saints. Also the testimony as to miracles was in a precarious condition, inasmuch as only a feebly attested story had grown up that the bodies of those who were executed were seen on the stakes intact for the space of forty-four days. It is to be noted that, in accordance with Canon law, sanctity of life and merits in reference to the Church are not

<sup>1</sup> See Wiseman (Cardl.), *Rome and the Catholic Episcopate*. Burns and Lambert, London.



considered as forming adequate grounds for canonization unless they are supported by a supplement in the shape of the supernatural, consisting of at least two miracles. These are generally easy to show, especially when they are taken from a time long past, and they testify, so far as they were credited formerly among contemporaries, that they at any rate believed in some supernatural power working in the person by whom or for whom they were wrought. They do not, however, always answer to modern taste. When Leo XII in 1825 canonized Julianus, a Spanish monk, of little repute otherwise, the Romans were diverted over the one picture which represented how this miracle-worker takes birds already placed upon the fire from the roasting spit and restores them to life, and the jest was in the mouths of all that nevertheless they would rather have a saint who should place the birds on the spit for them, than one who should let them fly away from it! Who would care to institute inquiry as to how many educated and uneducated people in the whole Catholic Church still believe seriously in such a miracle? How many are they likely to be?

We might also regard canonization thus as only involving the earthly recognition of a man who had deserved well of the Church, and who at the same time has set forth in himself an attractive impersonation of Christianity; it may be compared to the erection of a statue. If it rested on a rational basis of this kind, there would as a rule be nothing objectionable in canonization. But this by no means corresponds to the ecclesiastical view which contemplates a celestial exaltation, and intercessions and miraculous assistance now for the first time available. According to that sagacious limitation of



its significance, the Church would have misled the faithful to an unsuitable kind of religious veneration and to indulge hopes that were not justified, i. e. would have duped them. And in that case also quite different persons would have merited canonization. The same Pope would not have canonized some obscure Japanese, and yet have had an invincible hesitation as to canonizing the discoverer of a quarter of the globe<sup>1</sup>, who, it must be admitted, undertook to find a new world for Christendom and endured much on its behalf.

Hesitation with regard to the religious veneration of a created being was felt in the Church at an earlier period than this in the case of the angels, so far as they were made the objects of a special cult in individual communities, perhaps owing to Essene<sup>2</sup> tradition. We find in the Old Testament that on the one hand the worship of God alone is jealously maintained, but on the other, in accordance with Eastern custom, we have kneeling and prostration before angels, kings, and prophets, which is also termed worship, although courteously declined on the occasions of angelic appearances in the New Testament. In the same way the Church's pronouncements and opinions varied with regard to the honour due to angels. Higher interest soon fell to the lot of the saints and their likenesses, inasmuch as these represented definite, visible individuals. In the iconoclastic controversy what we may call a fanatical shrewdness issuing from the imperial court long contended in vain against a fanatical superstition on the part of the people. In the final victory of the images and their saints at the later Council of Nicaea (787) the interests of monotheism were kept in view by the declaration that worship

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Columbus, d. 1506.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 175.



appertains to the Godhead alone, and merely a pious service to angels, saints, and their images. Employing words of Greek origin, which in earlier times had often been used indifferently, they designated the former as *Latria*, the latter as a rule as *Doulia*, rendered, however, by bowing of the knees, burning of incense, and kissing of the sacred images. The early Catholic Church had made this distinction: 'We venerate Christ as the Son of God; we love the martyrs as His disciples and followers.' But their altars by that time stood round about the high altar. Every Order, every class, every occupation gradually came to possess its protecting patron. The Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> declared it to be only good and profitable humbly to invoke the saints who ruled along with Christ, in order that we might receive the benefit of their intercessions in heaven and their assistance upon earth, while in gratitude to God for their victories we honour their memories.

Opposition to an unjustifiable confidence in men (compare 'Cursed is the man that trusteth in man'<sup>2</sup>), and to the religious veneration of them found expression, however, at an early date in the life of the Church. Tertullian<sup>3</sup> says: 'Who allows you to give to man what is reserved for the Godhead? Be it enough for the martyr to atone for his own misdeeds. Who is there who has redeemed another from death save the only begotten Son of God?' St. Augustine<sup>4</sup> says: 'Make not thyself a religion out of the cult of dead men, for, if they have lived a pious life, they will not seek such honours, but they desire that we should worship Him Who imparts to them the light whereby they rejoice that we are companions with them in service.' Thus

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XXII*, c. 3; *XXV*, de *Invoc. Sanct.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Jer. xvii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> *De Pudic.* 22. [H.]

<sup>4</sup> *De Vera Relig.* c. 25. [H.]



they are to be honoured for the sake of imitation, not to be adored for the sake of religion. This quiet opposition, little regarded by ecclesiastical authorities, goes on for many centuries; even pious Churchmen preferring to cling directly to Christ rather than to the saints. The talented poet, Angelus Silesius, who after he had left us made war upon the Protestant Church with the zeal of a proselyte, nevertheless exclaims

Away, away, ye seraphim ; ye cannot give me life !  
 Away, away, ye saints, and all that bids me look to you !  
 Now do I desire none of you ; I throw myself alone  
 Into the uncreated ocean of the pure Godhead.

Protestantism rejected the invocation of the saints, because Holy Scripture does not teach us to invoke them nor to seek aid from them, but refers us to Christ alone as Mediator, Intercessor, and Redeemer. This rejection, as far as the Lutheran Church was concerned, took place in a milder fashion, with the admission that the saints in heaven in general pray on behalf of the Church, that their memory is to be cherished, in order to imitate their faith and their virtues, and further that God is to be thanked for the mercy which He exercised towards them. Nevertheless the pagan element in the popular belief is also denounced in the 'Apology'<sup>1</sup>: 'Distinct charges are assigned to individual saints, as that Anna<sup>2</sup> spends wealth, Sebastian<sup>3</sup> aids to withstand the plague, Valentine<sup>4</sup> cures epilepsy, George<sup>5</sup> protects riders. Such opinions come of pagan prototypes. For in this way the Romans thought that Juno gives riches, Febris removes fever, Castor and Pollux guard riders.' More

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 4.      <sup>2</sup> According to tradition the mother of the Virgin.

<sup>3</sup> A Roman soldier and Christian martyr ; d. circ. 288.

<sup>4</sup> A Christian martyr in the reign of the Emperor Claudius, circ. 270.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 80.



bluntly, Calvinism in its shrinking from every deification of the creature condemned all invocation of deceased saints as a deceit of Satan, in order to divert men from the sole reliance upon Christ. Lutheranism occasionally concurred with this, inasmuch as it declared the invocation of saints to be one specimen of the abuses introduced by Antichrist in order to obscure the knowledge of Christ.

It is undoubtedly a matter of history that owing to the veneration of saints, especially of a particular local saint, our Lord and the Father Himself have sometimes been put to a certain extent into the background; but that was an abuse. According to the Church's intention that which is to be venerated in the saints is simply a reflection of the glory of Christ, His image in them. Reformed Protestantism deems the majesty of the Divine Father not to be lessened by the fact that we approach Him only through the intervention of the Son. Accordingly there is no necessity that the majesty of the God-Man should be impaired by mediators and intercessors, all of whom at any rate only wear His livery. Especially are these invoked first of all in connexion with men's earthly possessions, and as helpers in temporal necessities. This sometimes takes place with quite artless selfishness, when we read, perhaps over the door of a house in the Tyrol: 'Saint Florian<sup>1</sup>, protect this house, and burn others!' Accordingly along with the need the veneration also not unfrequently departs, in consonance with the proverb: 'When one is over the bridge, one despises St. Nepomuk<sup>2</sup>.' The same comes to pass in other matters in life as well. On the gable of a

<sup>1</sup> A saint of lower Austria, martyred by drowning in 230.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 84.



house in the mill quarter of Vienna we may read : ' This house at an earlier date stood under God's protection, and nevertheless it was burnt. I have now rebuilt it and entrusted it to St. Florian.' Yet there is not an unqualified confidence reposed upon the conscience even of this insurer against fire, for we read elsewhere : ' This house is under St. Florian's protection ; if it burns, the disgrace is his.' There is a celebrated saying as to St. Francis of Assisi : ' He hearkens to what God Himself hears not.' This is the thought which is close neighbour to all invocation of saints.

If, moreover, a danger exists that the Catholic Church, in the variegated richness of its legends, together with the fictions made up for the gratification of the Papacy, should lose its sense of the importance of historical truth, yet the legends of the saints are to a Catholic people the poetic presentation of antiquity and of all epochs of the Church, and they are kept alive in the hearts of the people by the veneration of the saints and the interests which this involves. Among Protestant nations saints have almost altogether died out, except some weather saints like St. Pancras<sup>1</sup> and St. Servatius<sup>2</sup>, before whom even Frederick the Great<sup>3</sup> assumed an attitude of respect when his orangery, set out too soon, was caught by the frost. Along with the saints popular memories with regard to the Church are to a large extent extinguished, so far as they belong to days antecedent to the Reformation, which readily presents

<sup>1</sup> A martyr at Rome under Diocletian.

<sup>2</sup> Bp. of Tongres, a man of exceeding sanctity, who lived at the time when the invasion of Gaul by the Huns under Attila was imminent. He died at Maestricht, where, it was said, the snow never lay on his tomb.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 226.



itself to the ordinary Protestant consciousness as a sun rising upon the profound night that soon after the decease of the Apostles settled down upon the whole earth. Moreover, the development of Christian art comes through devotion to the saints. The impetus was of a twofold character. The legendary history of the subject set forth the rich variety of the shapes which that development might employ, from the innocent grace of a St. Agnes<sup>1</sup>, from the charming beauty of a penitent Magdalene<sup>2</sup>, to the profound seriousness of the communion of the dying St. Jerome<sup>3</sup>. Besides, the interest excited by a patron or local saint formed an inducement to order works of art, and inspired a liking to hazard expense with that object. If we question with regard to their sources the noble productions in the way of statuary, which in some cases yet stand on their original sacred sites, in others are ranged in museums, it is sometimes a town which has dedicated a statue to its saint in return for deliverance from calamity, sometimes a worshipful company who desired to honour their patron by means of a statue, sometimes a husband or a mother, that, in memory of a beloved one departed, have erected the statue to their and his saint, who has brought them from above, if not help, at least consolation. These are not interests of a directly religious kind; yet they are likely to be of advantage to religion as well, inasmuch as the sharing in this statue, this chapel, this church led on to a sharing in the great spiritual Church, and the refined features of the beloved patron

<sup>1</sup> A Roman virgin beheaded in Diocletian's persecution.

<sup>2</sup> The woman out of whom were cast seven devils (Luke viii. 2), identified, probably erroneously, with the woman who was 'a sinner' (Luke vii. 37 ff.).

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 113.



saint have stamped themselves upon the young soul, so that in the hour of moral danger he becomes to it a veritable guardian angel.

All this must be admitted ; also that at any rate as a mental conception there exists a distinction between devotion to God and the service paid to the saints, and so between unconditional surrender and a piety which is scarcely more than a making use of the saint for the accomplishment of our wishes. In ordinary practical life the two are always mingled, and they involve moreover a tendency to this ; for in the first place all religious veneration has a leaning towards this unqualified surrender, seeing that otherwise it would not be religious, and in the second the great majority of people are wont so to manage their service of God that they hope thereby to attain their desire and avert evil, primarily in this world, and in the further distance in the next as well. But we have no substantial ground for the assumption that the saints can become cognizant of our wishes, and contribute at all to their fulfilment. Against this view an appeal is made to the intercessions of living friends, to whom we commit our cause. Such a thing is a charming manifestation of hearty and, at the same time, religious fellowship ; but whether in this way any kind of change can be made in what, apart from this, falls to our lot as right and good in accordance with God's will, must nevertheless remain at least undecided. Also the pious belief that loved ones who have departed intercede with God on our behalf, e. g. a mother for her child, has no right to do more than assume this in general terms, not with regard to any definite contingency. Nay, it may be simply taken as a pious fancy. 'Who then has revealed to you that the saints have ears long



enough to hear our prayers?' Thus Calvin wrote. It is not very delicately put, but the thing itself is undeniable. That the Omniscient hears our prayers, both uttered and unspoken, is guaranteed by religion itself, but that spirits which, though blessed, are subject to permanent limitations and beyond the reach of earth can hear them, we have no right so much as to surmise. Besides, an appeal is made to the fact that we go without hesitation to the nearest friends and courtiers of a monarch to obtain their good offices, in order to secure the granting of our suit. Here is revealed to the full the limitation of view which attends upon this cult of human beings—the view which regards our gracious God as a great unapproachable Master, whose goodwill is to be got hold of by all sorts of pleadings on the part of His favourites, not as the Omniscient, Who knows better than we do ourselves what we need, and not as the All-good, Who earnestly desires that we should pray to Him simply for our own sake, that He may grant us what shall serve to our peace. Lastly, an appeal is made to the many undeniable cases where a saint has come to the rescue when invoked in trouble. But how often has he been invoked in vain!

The cult of the saints has fulfilled a polytheistic need within a monotheistic religion in filling up the immense interval between man and the Godhead, and it has arisen upon the foundation supplied by the gods of the old world. It came to pass through a feeling justifiable, though unconsciously so, that the fair temple, the last closing monument of the world-subduing religion of Rome, the Pantheon, this heaven upon earth, formerly erected by Agrippa to the avenging Jupiter and all the gods, now duly con-



secrated by the bishop of Rome to Mary and all martyrs (in 608), was thereby made into the Christian Pantheon. For what else are these saints but heroes of a Christian type, half-deified men? What else is this Roman canonization but the apotheosis of earlier days?—with the important difference certainly that formerly in Rome it was the soul of the emperor that was taken up to heaven, merely because the gods had placed in his crime-stained and soiled hands the government of the world, while now this is extended to poor people adorned only with Christian virtues.

But also the blessing involved in that type of morality which they represent is not to be regarded as an unqualified one. These saints with their works of supererogation, their eccentric virtues, and unnatural renunciations have led many a noble disposition astray from the natural path of the simple fulfilment of duty, and have to its confusion interposed themselves in front of the highest moral prototype in the imitation of Christ. Joseph II<sup>1</sup> in the interests of Christianity had courage to declare his desire 'that the Gospel should be preached to the common people instead of stories about canonized folk'. Very many canonized persons, who suffered much and did much, only not that which was laid down for them by the modest round of domestic and civil duties where God had placed them, might venture to be compared, notwithstanding all the differences in aim, with the democratic Londoners of our day, in thinking of whom one who was hardly tried and who now is silent, Johann Kinkel<sup>2</sup>, said: 'It seems to involve merely a more

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> Johann Gottfried Kinkel, a German poet, historian of art, and revolutionist; d. 1882. (The quotation is from *Hans Ibeles*. Stuttgart, 1860. [H.]



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refined sort of egoism, if any one does his individual duty. The highest grade of nobility of sentiment consists rather in absolutely renouncing the enjoyment of doing one's duty, and with painful self-sacrifice neglecting it in order to work for higher ideas.' Rather than do their duty very many men like to do more than their duty—a very doubtful piece of ethics.

Accordingly what Möhler says: 'If we are bound to adore Christ, we cannot but venerate the saints,' and what he immediately adds: 'The doctrine of the Church does not maintain that we must invoke the saints, but only that they *can* be invoked,' are only flattering utterances, veiling the superstitious cult by means of a thought expressive of faith. That thought, as true as it is consistent with faith, is that when Christ introduced into the world the impetus of a new religious life and led an innumerable multitude to salvation, He in an exceptional way attested and brought to light in certain highly favoured men the power of His Spirit, and that we are therefore honouring in them a reflection of His inherent glory, without thereby failing to recognize their human weaknesses. Thereby it is to be considered as established and justified that the decision of a man, who allows himself to be termed the Viceroy of Christ upon the earth, *ipso facto* bestows upon another man already dead rank and power in heaven, so that altars are built to him, incense burned, knees bent before his image, and prayers directed to him. This is the superstitious cult which savours strongly of paganism. The Catholic Church will not in the individual case readily compel any one to invoke a saint, but she will not allow to pass for a believer one who in any way declares that



on principle he will not do this, and who thus fails to hold it with the Council of Trent to be good and wholesome. More than one true believer in former days has been buried in the dungeons of the Inquisition or sacrificed upon its scaffolds because he refused to invoke saints, in accordance with the same rules of justice by virtue of which believers were in ancient days condemned to death in Rome because they refused to scatter incense to Jupiter and the other gods. A Church Father actually says with joyful pride: 'The Lord has introduced into the temples instead of your gods those who have died in Him.' But in this there is contained a tragic irony that those martyrs who offered up themselves in order not to offer to false gods, should actually become the ancestral chiefs of the saints, to whom in their turn, side by side with the one true God, altars are erected and vessels of incense swung. The cult of the saints then may include much that is beautiful, and may have conferred such upon the art of portrayal. The gods of Greece have been thought still finer, and produced yet finer results in art. Nevertheless from the commencement onwards the stamp of transitoriness was impressed upon their religion.

To a certain extent the cult of genius took the place of devotion to the saints. At the Fichte<sup>1</sup> celebration in Vienna Giskra<sup>2</sup> said: 'To-day we are celebrating Fichte, the man of intellect; and as for them, they are celebrating St. Wenceslaus<sup>3</sup>.' The German nation, Protestants and Catholics, in the November days of 1859 were keeping the centenary

<sup>1</sup> Johann Gottlieb Fichte, a celebrated German metaphysician; d. 1814.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Giskra, an Austrian statesman; d. 1879.

<sup>3</sup> St. Wenceslaus was duke of Bohemia (circ. 928-36), and a patron saint of that country.



festival of Schiller<sup>1</sup>. They will scarcely ever celebrate the memory of a saint in so brilliant a manner, as indeed no saint has exercised so powerful an influence upon the thoughts of our people.

Among the Lutheran population in Swabia the saying goes that every Catholic immediately before his death, if not sooner, has to become evangelical; for after extreme unction the priest sets forth to the dying man that he is to address himself to Christ alone, since the saints are of no avail. As early as the time of the Reformation there are shown traces of this view that it was held to be a transition to the Gospel, if any one in great distress, and more especially in the last extremity, addressed himself to Christ. '*Straight on* makes the best racehorse,' said the court physician to the dying Duke George<sup>2</sup>, the eloquent foe of Lutheranism, and he is said to have moved him to commit his soul to the mercy of the real Saviour alone. From the fact then, as Luther too has remarked, that early Catholic prayers for the dying, and little books for use at such times, call by preference upon the Saviour in the gravity of the hour of death, and the extended crucifix points to the sufferings of Christ, the opinion may have arisen, the truth of which is fraught with anticipations, that the cult of saints will sooner or later disappear, and all Christendom again become evangelical.

<sup>1</sup> The famous German poet, dramatist, and historian, b. Nov. 1759, d. 1805.

<sup>2</sup> Duke of Saxony 1500 till his death in 1539. He was educated for the priesthood, and himself engaged in debate with Luther after the disputation between the latter and Eck at Leipzig.



## CHAPTER III

### THE CULT OF MARY

#### A. The Holy Virgin.

AT the head of the saintly host the Virgin Mother of the Lord took her place, as one to whom, according to the theological definition of her popular worship, there is due an exceeding veneration, *hyperdoulia*. Her virginal conception of the Divine Son was set forth in the first chapters of St. Matthew and St. Luke. Inasmuch as He, the second Adam, the Father of the redeemed human race, was contrasted with the first Adam, it was an obvious thing to place Eve and Mary over against one another. St. Irenaeus<sup>1</sup> had said: 'The human race became subject to death by means of a young woman; by means of a young woman it is delivered.' As it became the fashion to consider Mary as the ideal of the female sex, accordingly in an age and Church where virginity was held in the highest estimation as a bodily virtue, it was necessarily maintained in an unqualified manner with regard to her, contrary to every law of nature. Thus the belief that even through the Divine Birth any change in her condition took place, or that our Lord afterwards had brothers and sisters, was impugned as foolish and heretical as early as the fourth century. That happened which must happen where undue weight is laid upon matter connected with our nature.

<sup>1</sup> v. 19; cp. iii. 22. 4. [H.]



Thoughts intended to do honour to their object, yet indecorous in their character, dealt with and disclosed matters which otherwise nature and custom veil in silence.

When in the fierce conflicts of the fourth century the Church came to be conscious what it meant by recognizing a perfect Divine nature alongside of the human one in the Saviour, it became customary without much consideration, and in language which carried with it the yet fresh recollection of the Mother of the Gods<sup>1</sup> belonging to Mount Ida, to term Mary 'her who bare God'. Nestorius<sup>2</sup>, Patriarch of Constantinople, set himself against this. 'Has God,' said he, 'a mother? Then is paganism to be pardoned for introducing a mother of the gods, and St. Paul is a liar, who said in speaking of Christ's Godhead that it was without father or mother or descent<sup>3</sup>. Let us cease to call Mary her who bare God, that we be not tempted to make her a goddess, and so become pagans.' At this point the sermon was interrupted by the shout, 'That is atheism!'

Since that time the just conception of the relation of the two natures of Christ appeared to be affected by the glorification of Mary. Hitherto He was represented as the good Shepherd, who is carrying home the lost lamb, as the Teacher of the world in the midst of the Apostles, or as the Redeemer of the world upon the Cross; now it became customary to represent Him as the Divine Child in the bosom of

<sup>1</sup> Cybele or Rhea, in Greek mythology the wife of Cronos (Saturnus). Ida, a mountain range in Phrygia, was a chief seat of her worship.

<sup>2</sup> Patriarch 428-31, when he was deposed by the general Council of Ephesus. The Nestorian heresy consisted in holding that Christ possessed two distinct personalities.

<sup>3</sup> See Heb. vii. 3.



the Virgin Mother. Poetry and bad taste vied with one another in her glorification. In Constantinople Proclus the presbyter preached to this effect against his Patriarch: 'The Holy Mother of God and Virgin had summoned us together here; she, the unsullied robe of virginity, the spiritual Paradise of the second Adam, the workshop for the fitting together of the two Natures, the bridal chamber where the Logos affianced himself to the flesh, the living bush (reminding us of the literal one of old <sup>1</sup>) unconsumed by the burning pangs of the Divine Birth, the light cloud bearing Him Who is above the Cherubim, Maiden and Mother, Virgin and yet heaven itself, the sole bridge connecting God with men, the awesome loom which yielded the Incarnation, upon which the robe of the union of Natures was woven in unspeakable fashion, where the Holy Spirit was the Weaver, the power overshadowing from above the spinner, Adam's original substance the wool, the flesh of the unsullied Virgin the woof, the immeasurable grace of the body that bare the burden the weaving frame, and the saying which found a passage through the ear the artificer. Who has seen or heard a thing such as this, that God, though infinite, dwelt in a human Mother; that the body of a Virgin was not too narrow for Him Whom the heaven cannot contain <sup>2</sup>?'

A fancy which half-unconsciously pictured to itself the God-Man merely as the masculine element in the Godhead, brought about the exaltation of the Mother of God as the female element in the conception. Hence came the desire (which soon developed into an assertion) that the miraculous circumstances attendant upon the Birth of her Divine Son should have their complete

<sup>1</sup> Exod. iii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Acta Concilii Ephes.* Part I, ch. i. [H.]



counterpart in herself, so far as the necessary differences of human origin and sex permitted this. In the apocryphal Gospel of the Childhood her birth also is announced by an angel to her aged mother Anna, and all the miraculous surroundings hold good from the first for the future mother. Among anonymous writings towards the end of the fourth century, and in one ascribed to St. John, her Assumption is related. Another tradition, however, told of her death (*dormitio*) in the midst of the Apostles. A reconciliation between the accounts was effected by saying that when she died the Apostles placed her in a tomb covered with flowers, and that, while they gazed, she was lifted out of the sepulchre by a host of angels, and borne up to heaven—at once a resurrection and an assumption.

But not till the Middle Ages did she become, owing to the old German chivalrous feeling of veneration for women, completely the Queen of heaven and of men's hearts, the spotless lily, the rose without thorns. Men attached themselves more readily to her womanly gentleness, at times too to her feminine weaknesses, than to the stern Divine Father Whose justice, even where He desired to pardon, has demanded the blood of His only Son to atone for the guilt of mankind; more readily also than to the gravity of God the Son, Who offered the enormous sacrifice that consisted in a dying God, Who demands that we should take His Cross upon ourselves, and Who one day as Judge of the world will condemn a part of mankind to endless torments. The traditional mechanical form of cut-and-dried repetition of the same prayer obtained in the case of the Virgin the agreeable appellation of rose-garland (*rosarium sanctae Mariae*), in which the English



salutation, 'Ave Maria, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women,' is interwoven only with an occasional Paternoster. To every setting sun there was given at the same time out of all faithful hearts the parting salutation, 'Ave Maria!' The religion of the Middle Ages, especially of the men, was to a large extent the cult of Mary. She is for all her adorers the Madonna, Notre Dame, Our dear Lady; the goddess at once of renunciation and of love. It is a familiar observation that the more absolutely a religion rejects everything sensual, the more sensual as a rule is the form taken by its Deity and its conception of the future existence. Simply because it lays this great stress upon the sacrifice of everything sensual, it for that reason seeks and promises compensation in the next life. Thus the Virgin demands the sacrifice of the flesh, the surrender of earthly love, and therefore herself becomes the object of that love. Stern monks laud the happiness of lying upon her virgin breast. What is the difference between earthly and heavenly breasts, except that the latter exist only in the imagination and are so much the more entrancing? The severe Cardinal Damiani<sup>1</sup>, who looked upon no earthly woman, assures us that God the Father by reason of the beauty of the Virgin burns with love towards her, that in her honour He sings the whole of the Canticles<sup>2</sup>, and announces to the astonished angels that He desires to renew the world by her means. Her beauty disarms the wrath of the Divine Father at the sins of mankind, while Mary, with all sorts of terms of endearment

<sup>1</sup> Pietro Damiani, before becoming bishop of Ostia, and cardinal, was a hermit at Fonte Avellano, near Gubbio, in Umbria; d. 1072.

<sup>2</sup> The 'Song of Solomon' in the Old Testament Canon.



in conflict moreover with one another, gives ear to the Deity, and the saying of the poet proves itself true, 'Long since, it is true, the Apostle expelled the worship of Nature as divine, yet the people in their faith venerate her as the Mother of God.'

While the lady Venus in the view of the Middle Ages passes for a beautiful devil, Mary unconsciously steps into her place, although as Venus Urania. The fact has left its trace in the language. A little plant, used from ancient times as a love potion, has borne in succession the names *capillus Veneris*, Freya's<sup>1</sup> herb, Maria-grass. Our *Liebfrauenmilch* from Worms is not exactly the same mild and generous beverage as that which the ancients called Aphrodite's milk, but the same thought is clear which has, we might say, *baptized* both wines, if that expression had not in the case of wine a suggestion of irreverence. Moreover, the veneration of Mary as a rain-providing goddess, and as of the snow and of the sea, may well be explained by the fact that in the popular faith she took the place of the old German nature goddesses, Freya and Frau Holla<sup>2</sup>.

Mary is full of gentleness and indulgence. She is represented as Mother of mercy, while with her cloak she covers over repentant sinners and also the whole Order of the Jesuits, who are so devoted to her, from the wrath of God. Folklore is rich in little histories of her goodness and more than goodness. A Spanish nobleman in the pressure of distress promised his wife, whom he held dear, to the devil

<sup>1</sup> In old Norse mythology the goddess of faithfulness and love.

<sup>2</sup> Freya was goddess of fruitfulness; Frau Holla, a personification of Hades ('hell'), according to the Norse conception of it as a place of mists and gloom.



at the end of seven years, if he would make him rich for this period. The time elapsed. He brought her sorrowfully to the appointed place. When they had arrived at a chapel dedicated to Mary, the poor wife begs him to let her first pray once more there. She comes out again. The nobleman hands her over to the devil, but the latter recognizes her. It is the Madonna herself. She has taken the shape of her who had been pledged, and who still prays at the altar. The devil cannot hold possession of the Queen of heaven. When the gate-keeper of a nunnery passes out with her lover, Mary taking her shape serves as her representative, until the former returns weary of the world, steeped as it is in sin, and repentant. Some presumptuous companions laid a wager as to which of them could win the best jewel from the objects of their affections. In the excitement of the contest one joined in the bet, who in his heart had chosen the Holy Virgin alone to be his love. On his application to her in his perplexity, that he may win the bet she bestows upon him that which no modest maiden would bestow. Even creatures without reason do not cry to her in vain. A starling in the claws of a sparrow-hawk calls out, 'Ave Maria,' and is rescued, 'as the sinful soul is thereby rescued from the clutch of Satan.' The German poet, Walther von der Vogelweide<sup>1</sup>, who was so outspoken in denouncing the faults of the Church, nevertheless urges that 'We sing at all times the praises of this sweet maiden, who can refuse her Son nothing, for in heaven everything is done in accordance with her desire. The world is not only redeemed by the blood of Jesus, but also purified by the milk of Mary, this earliest nutriment

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 387.



of the Divine child upon earth, which recalled to Him heaven'.

This power in heaven and on earth remained, however, not inconsistent with monotheism, for it was regarded in a genuinely feminine aspect as a power in the way of intercession. But the Middle Ages held it to be reasonable that the Divine Father should accord to the prayers of the Virgin Mother all the consideration which a noble knight owes to the wishes of his lady, and if her interposition on behalf of all her adorers is thought by the Son of God to go to too great lengths, His Mother refers Him to the fifth Commandment.

Even in the heart of Catholic piety there is from time to time aroused an involuntary Christian protest against the cult of Mary. When Thomas à Kempis<sup>1</sup> desired to persuade the young Wessel<sup>2</sup> in this direction, the latter said: 'My father, why do you not lead me in preference direct to Christ, Who so graciously calls to Him all the weary and heavy laden?'<sup>3</sup> There could not but enter the mind doubts touching all the strange demands which were made upon the Queen of heaven. Erasmus<sup>4</sup>, while at the same time opposed to the working of the Reformation, expressed an identical sentiment in the shape of an amusing satire containing serious thoughts, and purporting to be an autograph letter of the Virgin, which runs thus, though with less brilliance, of course, than in his good Latin: 'Mary, Mother of Jesus, greets Glaucoptus. For your zealous announcement, following Luther, that it is superfluous to invoke the

<sup>1</sup> The German devotional writer, reputed author of the *De Imitatione Christi*; d. 1471.

<sup>2</sup> A Dutch reformer called 'Lux Mundi'; d. 1489.

<sup>3</sup> See Matt. xi. 28.

<sup>4</sup> *Peregrinatio religionis ergo*. [H.]



saints, I, for my part, am very grateful to you. For in former time the impious requirements of mortals almost cost me my life. It is from me alone that they demand everything, as though my Son were always a child, inasmuch as my maternal relations towards Him are such that He does not venture to refuse anything to my desire, fearing that I will in return refuse Him my breast in His thirst. Sometimes they ask of the Virgin what a respectable young man would scarcely bring himself to ask of a procuress, and what I am ashamed to put into writing. The merchant who sails away to Spain for profit confides to me the chastity of his concubine. The maiden dedicated to God, who throws away the veil and makes ready for flight, entrusts to me her character for innocence, which she thereby desires to surrender. The gamester cries: "If thou wilt be favourable to me, heavenly One, a portion of my gains shall be assigned to Thee." And if the dice do not fall propitiously, they abuse me for not assisting in their wicked deeds. He who surrenders himself to disgraceful gains appeals to me: "Give me a rich catch!" If I refuse anything, they call out to me, "Art thou then the Mother of Compassion?" The wishes of others are not so much godless as senseless. The unmarried cries: "Mary, give me a well-fashioned and rich bridegroom!" the married: "Give me beautiful children!" the woman with child: "Give me an easy delivery!" the old woman: "Grant me a long life without cough and fever!" the greybeard, in his second childhood, cries: "Grant me to become young again!" the philosopher: "Grant me the power to tie knots that cannot be undone!" the priest: "Give me a fat prebend!" the courtier: "Grant me, keeping faithful to the



truth, to make my confession at the hour of death!" the peasant: "Give me seasonable rain!" the peasant woman: "Preserve my sheep and oxen uninjured!" If I decline anything, I am cruel. If I refer them to my Son, they say, "He desires what thou desirest." Thus I, in my single person, a wife and a virgin, have to watch the interests of those at sea, of traders, of gamesters, of those who are being married, of those bearing children, of courtiers, of peasants. And what I have said represents the least of the things which I undergo. Nevertheless, I am now much less bothered by these occupations, for which I would give you heartfelt thanks, had not this advantage brought with it a greater disadvantage: the more leisure, the less honour and the less revenues. In former time I was saluted as Queen of Heaven, Mistress of the Universe; nowadays I barely receive from somebody an Ave Maria. In former time I was arrayed in gold and jewellery, and had abundant material for changes of raiment. Gifts of gold and precious stones were offered me. Now I can scarcely cover myself with a cloak rent in two and gnawed by mice. My yearly income is hardly large enough for me to support a miserable sacristan, who burns in my honour a little lamp or tallow candle. And this might be borne, if it were not said that still worse is in preparation. For thou art striving, if report be true, to drive out of the Church all the saints in existence. Consider well what thou art undertaking. The various saints have no lack of power to avenge injustice. Peter, if cast out of the Church, can in his turn close to thee the gate of the kingdom of Heaven. Paul has a sword.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His emblem in art, as that of St. Peter is the keys, of St. Bartholomew the knife.



Bartholomew is provided with his knife. William<sup>1</sup>, under the cowl of the monk, is in full armour, and not without a weighty lance. Or wouldst thou care to commence with St. George<sup>2</sup>, who is a knight formidable at once by reason of spear and of sword. Also St. Anthony<sup>3</sup> is not without protection. He has the sacred fire. In the same way the remainder possess either their arms or calamities, which they send upon whomsoever they desire. But as for me, although I am without defence, thou shalt not cast me out, unless at the same time thou castest out my Son with me, whom I hold in my arms. From Him I refuse to be separated. Thou must either drive Him out at the same time with me, or leave us both. Perhaps, then, thou wouldst prefer a Church without Christ. This is what I desired that thou shouldst know. Consider what answer is to be given me, for the matter really lies at my heart. Written from our house of stone, on August 1, in the year of my Son, 1524. I, the Virgin of stone, have subscribed it with my own hand.'

The Reformation, in its documentary Confessions, took up a position of respect and reverence before the Mother of the Saviour. When occasion presents itself in the Lutheran teaching concerning the Person of Christ, she is expressly recognized as one who bare God, and as a pure Virgin, even after the Birth.<sup>4</sup> In a sermon at the Feast of the Visitation of our Lady, Luther made tender mention of her as the youthful Maiden whom we hold dear, adorned with the wreath of three fair roses, viz. faith, humility, and chastity. Her festivals, with the exception perhaps of the Assumption, which, however, stands in Protestant

<sup>1</sup> Abbot of Hirschau, 1069-81.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 80.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 190.

<sup>4</sup> See *Form. Conc.* p. 766. [H.]



Calendars, were kept in the Lutheran Church. They did not evoke enthusiasm, but were readily celebrated as week-day festivals, until, owing to a combination of secular parsimony and a sense of ecclesiastical propriety, they were relegated to the Sundays and fell into neglect. The objection to all veneration of the saints, which lay at the root of the Reformation, on the ground of interference with the sole mediation of Christ, had nevertheless undermined the main motive for the cult of Mary.

The Council of Trent, however, agreed in observing this silence, inasmuch as it interposed merely in order to deal with a matter of dispute within the Church.<sup>1</sup> The Roman Catechism<sup>2</sup> was the first document to direct again, though with pious prudence of expression, that prayers should be offered to the most Holy Virgin that she may reconcile us sinners with God, and by virtue of her conspicuous merits obtain from God the good things which are needed for this as well as for the future life.

The more unfettered spirit of the Gallican Church issued at the commencement of the seventeenth century and onwards many exhortations directed against those who were excessive in their veneration of the Virgin, who love and worship a creature more than the Creator, or in their devotion to the Mother forget the Son of God. She herself is made to protest against the hypocrites who invoke her as Intercessor and Mediator. But in the glow of the after-summer, produced by Jesuit Catholicism, the cult of Mary also came again into prominence. In particular, pious emotions in that direction are kindled where perhaps a shepherd lad or an old grandam persuaded them-

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XXV, De Invoc. &c.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> iv. 6, 8. [H.]



selves that they had actually seen an apparition of the Mother of God, precisely as she was represented in the local Church or on the twenty-kreutzer pieces<sup>1</sup> and Kremnitz<sup>2</sup> ducats in the Habsburg dominions. Ratisbonne, a rich Jew, was contemplating a likeness of Mary in the little church of St. Andrea delle Fratte, near the Piazza di Spagna.<sup>3</sup> Thereupon the Holy Virgin stepped forth alive from the picture. Ratisbonne fell at her feet a Jew, but he rose up a Christian : so it is stated in the inscription placed on the votive figure erected by him on the same spot. His brother was already a priest in Rome. Here, where people are accustomed to sublime events of the kind, the populace are not so much moved by them. Nevertheless, I have always come upon some women kneeling before one or another figure. After 1870, on the French border and in Alsace, Madonnas, sitting as a rule upon trees, have been seen by children. With their well-known special affection for France, they were pointing eastwards<sup>4</sup> in a threatening attitude. This, however, went no further than passing reports. It was only on two much-talked-of places that the belief took hold before the war. After the appearance at La Salette<sup>5</sup> (from 1851 onwards) had been celebrated, and also become suspicious, Lourdes, a small place at the foot of the Pyrenees, attained fame and prosperity by means of a belief in the appearance of the Madonna (first in 1858), and, that Germany might

<sup>1</sup> About 4*d.*

<sup>2</sup> A royal free city in the province of Bars. Hungary, noted for its gold and silver mines.

<sup>3</sup> In the northern quarter of Rome.

<sup>4</sup> Towards the victorious German enemy.

<sup>5</sup> In the old province of Dauphiné. The first alleged appearance was in 1846, but the story was for a while discredited by the ecclesiastical authorities.



not be behindhand, among many rival claimants, at length Marpingen, too, in the neighbourhood of Trier,<sup>1</sup> was held worthy of the gracious appearance. In both the last-named places it was school-girls, by a most happy coincidence, who saw the light figure in white raiment, the eldest first, and at her instance her two companions as well, and the sight was repeated for a series of days. By way of significant utterance on the part of the apparition, the children had to report a German version of the generally accepted dialogue at Lourdes, viz. 'Good mother, who are you?' 'I am the Immaculate Conception.' The hierarchy, after applying a decorous amount of testing, certified the truth of all. Pius IX actually had a model of the grotto at Lourdes erected in his garden. I myself happened to see him entering it (in 1874). His nuncio, Meglia, solemnly crowned the statue of Mary in the grotto of Lourdes at a great Church festival (in 1876). To Marpingen the chaplain, Prince Radziwill, a future bishop, brought at least the Pope's blessing. In the Vatican, however, there is no lack of acquaintance with the way in which the belief in such manifestations arises, even apart from direct deception. The Maid of Orleans<sup>2</sup> considered herself to be counselled by two saints, who appeared to her almost daily. Following their advice, she accomplished great deeds, and with this faith of hers mounted the scaffold: nevertheless, the learned bishop of Orleans<sup>3</sup> appears

<sup>1</sup> Otherwise called Trèves, on the Moselle.

<sup>2</sup> Jeanne d'Arc, the French national heroine, entrusted with the command of the army, raised the siege of Orleans by the English, and enabled by her subsequent success Charles VII to be crowned at Rheims. Later she was betrayed to the English, sentenced by an ecclesiastical tribunal, and burnt at the stake at Rouen in 1431.

<sup>3</sup> Dupanloup, who in 1876 unsuccessfully sought her canonization from the papal Curia.



to obtain for himself the cardinal's hat rather than the glory of canonization for the most genuine saint of France. But a sign of the able way in which the Jesuits have worked up the country is afforded by the fact of the people's hastening to unite in paying their devotions at the places where the Madonna had shown herself to the children, as if the spot itself had become in a special fashion sacred. No one seems to think of the omnipresence of God in all countries, or, if something perceptible to sense is wanted, of the God-Man who every morning is present in the nearest village Church for the benefit of the faithful. People flocked together in the expectation of experiencing miracles; and as thousands came with their infirmities in the belief that here they would find a miraculous cure, some naturally went away actually cured without any deception; of others it was declared that they had found here peace of soul, of more value than bodily health. For the benefit of these, however, by providential arrangement at the three places of the manifestation, a spring was found close by, the curative water of which, taken at the time, and soon exported like seltzer-water, formed a valuable article of trade. In the years immediately after the war half France appeared to set out for Lourdes. These pilgrimages were not without a combined flavour of papal and legitimist authorization. They were, however, spoken of as an indubitable symptom of the hold which Catholicism had upon the heart of France. Police regulations with a view to the crowds of people appeared only reasonable, in order that the owners of the soil might not have everything trampled down and broken away. So also provision was made with regard to open deception. Bismarck on one occasion,



in the presence of Suabian ecclesiastics, expressed himself thus: 'Ay, you see, we with our weapons are incapable of dealing with such things as are said to take place at Marpingen and Lourdes. Police have already proved themselves of no avail. A cure can only be effected by the agency of the school.' True; although among those who flocked there the educated element has not been wanting, especially among the aristocracy, who, we suppose, are not without school learning. Yet the faithful permitted themselves to wonder that if the Mother of God does for once have the goodwill and the opportunity to allow herself to be seen upon our poor earth, she does not straightway appear to many Jews, Protestants, and moreover to some learned men. This would bring about a great conversion to the Catholic Church.

A measure of compensation was afforded by the belief which here and there arose that an image of Mary winked its eyes. This was not such a case as what has been shown with a fair amount of proof to have been done in the Middle Ages by means of a little machinery, whereby also tears of blood could be made to flow. The image was without deception. Hundreds of the faithful knelt before it with their souls stirred as though in the bodily presence of the Most Blessed One. Some were convinced that they saw the movement of the eyes in the form of long, fixed looks, others not: moreover, an end soon came both to winking and crowd. Nevertheless, Mary seems to have taken part in the conversion of Talleyrand<sup>1</sup> himself. On the day on which the old bishop of Autun died, of whom the Parisians said that when dying he

<sup>1</sup> Charles Maurice de Talleyrand Périgord, the famous French statesman and diplomatist; d. 1838.



actually duped the devil and cheated him of his soul, a communication, written long before and ambiguous in its phraseology, was dispatched to Rome, and the archbishop of Paris, Monsignor von Quelen, erected a statue to the Holy Virgin as the fulfilment of his vow for the sheep that was lost.

Liguori<sup>1</sup> affirms that God hearkens to Mary's prayers as though they were commands, that she has even the power to rescue souls from hell. He relates with conviction that a companion of St. Francis<sup>2</sup> saw in a vision two ladders. At the top of the red one Christ stood, on the white one Mary. Those who had attempted to climb up the first always fell back again, until a voice warned them to mount the second. This was successful, for Mary held out her hand to them, and they entered Paradise. The moral was that it is difficult to be saved through Christ, and easy through Mary. Gregory XVI<sup>3</sup> canonized Liguori. Pius IX associated him with the great Church teachers, and repeated on his authority the gallant expression as to prayers being commands.<sup>4</sup> When Gregory put forth the well-known Pastoral against all the freethinking tendencies of the nineteenth century, by which the Roman Church perceived itself to be threatened, his reliance for the steering of St. Peter's boat successfully through the storms was placed on the Virgin supreme in holiness, who has brought to nought all heresies, 'who is our hope, yea, the sole stay of our confidence.' Pius, in his circular letter of February 2nd, 1849, declares: 'She is exalted by reason of the greatness of her merits above all choirs of angels to

<sup>1</sup> Alphonso Maria de' Liguori, an Italian theologian, founder of the Order of the Redemptionists in 1732; d. 1787.

<sup>2</sup> Fra Leone. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 337.

<sup>4</sup> Allocation of July 25, 1873. [H.]



the throne of God, and has trodden the head of the old Serpent under the feet of her virtues. Our salvation is founded upon the holy Virgin, inasmuch as the Lord God has placed in her the full measure of everything that is good. If there is a hope and spiritual healing for us, it is from her solely and alone that we receive it.' In Ferrara<sup>1</sup> we read some years since a Lenten allocution of the bishop of that time: 'When they had both died, it might be doubted whether the God-Man redeemed the world more by His blood, or Mary by her tears.' Accordingly we must not be surprised if a French layman (Augustus Nicolas) added the flesh of a woman to the Holy Communion itself, affirming that 'she has the same part in the Redemption as in the Incarnation.'

In the spring of 1861 the Jesuit Pottgiesser discoursed of her inexhaustible goodness in preaching at a mission in Osnabrück<sup>2</sup>, and it was doubtless a frequent thing with him. 'Mary,' he said, 'has received into the condition of children us, the murderers of her Son, as a consequence of the words from the Cross, "Woman, behold thy Son!"'<sup>3</sup> For He could not surely have meant John, whose mother according to the flesh was still alive<sup>4</sup>; but St. John is here the representative of the whole of Christendom. Therefore, too, He addresses Mary not as mother but as "woman," in order by this general expression to indicate that she is the mother of us all. Yea, that is she, our true, holy, mother. And such is the daily petition and sigh from one century to another from a thousand and yet another thousand voices: "Holy Mary, have

<sup>1</sup> Capital of the province of the same name in North Italy.

<sup>2</sup> A city in Hanover.

<sup>3</sup> John xix. 26.

<sup>4</sup> Salome (Mark xv. 40; cp. Matt. xxvii. 56) was in all probability wife of Zebedee, and so mother of St. John.



compassion for us!"' The Roman Church is not responsible for all the extravagances of the cult of Mary, which depend upon the moods of individuals, of nations, and of various ages, yet she has almost always favoured them, as involved in her dogmatic teaching and confirming it. Therefore this Catholicism might perhaps be fitly termed *Mary-Christianity*. A missionary from Ethiopia relates with satisfaction that they were beginning there to call his Church Mary's house. In contrast to this, Protestantism sets forth direct relations with Christ.

Nevertheless we should be forming a narrow judgement if we desired to take too light a view of the significance of that devotion to women which in an age of lawless deeds poured out its gentle beams over the whole sex, holding before each individual a high and lovely ideal, and reminding every one in each maiden and each mother to honour, or at any rate gently to bear with, a copy, however sadly defaced, of Mary. Belief in her was the deification, or, to use an expression devoid of bias, the idealization of the female sex. Therefore the two most exalted positions of woman, the maid and the mother, were considered as combined in her. The two conditions which nature has for ever separated, but which nevertheless are one in the idea of this sex, here blend with an aspect of charm, in the mother with her firstborn on her breast, and yet with the innocent face of a maiden. It is this which diffuses a peculiar grace, it is this which faith venerates in the Virgin Mother, of whom Christendom sings:

He whom the universe could not contain  
Rests in the bosom of a Virgin,  
Clad in our flesh and blood.



She who adores the helpless child in the manger as her Creator and Redeemer, she through whose heart the sword did indeed pierce<sup>1</sup>, could not but fit in well with the poetry which celebrated in her the highest maternal happiness and the deepest maternal sorrow. Songs in honour of Mary came withal to be songs of love, in which it is often difficult to decide whether the yearning affection and the glorification have reference to our Lady in high heaven or to a mortal woman. They became matters for the most charming exercise of the sacred art of representing the Divine in the most attractive forms of nature—the Virgin in astonished resignation to the stupendous destiny which the heavenly Child declares to her—the Mother called blessed, and feeling herself blessed, in the idyllic surroundings of the stall at Bethlehem or under the palms of Egypt—the sorrowing One, the Niobe<sup>2</sup> of Christianity under the Cross, or with the loved Body on her breast; lastly the glorified One, the Divine Child still ever in her arms, from whose brow and out of whose child-eyes there flashes something like victory over the world and its redemption, a wreath of stars encircling her head, her foot upon the crescent moon, or trampling down the old serpent, or surrounded by angels who pay homage, appearing with stores of help and blessing to humble adorers out of all the ages of the Church.

How significant too is this representation of a miracle, co-extensive with nature, yet always coming back into the arms of nature, that is, the Mother with the Child, the Mother in joyful hope or in her deepest sorrow.

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii. 35.

<sup>2</sup> The fruitful subject of Greek art, wife of Amphion, punished, according to mythology, for boasting at the possession of seven children by seeing them all die through divine agency, and herself turned to stone.



Moreover the Child in the Mother's arms, as yet knowing nothing of the eternal Godhead, extends His little arm towards this familiar form, and, as life develops, the heart, bowed down by reason of sin or misfortune, turns to the Mother full of compassion :

‘Ah! do thou, in the abundance of thy sorrow, graciously incline thy face to my distress.’

It is a kindly belief that God not only in former days caused the highest happiness to accrue to mankind by means of the bosom of a tender Maiden, but that even nowadays by means of her gentle yet powerful hand dangers are met, tears dried, and gifts of blessing poured out. The representation of Mary as the universal Mother, and as possessed of a mother's heart for the most insignificant person and the smallest matter—a heart to which one can turn—has something of a home charm. May not many a youthful heart have confided to her its wishes and cares?

It is true, if we question history, the sole historical record, Holy Scripture, concerning her mundane and supramundane existence, facts present themselves as scanty and sternly opposed to all this idealization. It is only in St. Luke's history of the Childhood that Mary appears tender and thoughtful as the resigned handmaid of the Lord, stirred by highest hopes cherished by her people, and at home in the poetry of its past days, inasmuch as the exultant gratitude inspired by her maternal hopes is certainly an echo of the exultant prayer of Samuel's mother<sup>1</sup>, with its somewhat revolutionary anticipations: ‘He hath put down princes and hath exalted them of low degree. The hungry He hath filled with good things; and

<sup>1</sup> 1 Sam. ii. 1 ff.; Luke i. 46 ff.



the rich He hath sent empty away.' According to St. John our Lord disclaimed with stern language the interference of His Mother with His actions, as His hour was not yet come<sup>1</sup>. Well may *we* also call blessed the Mother on whose breast He lay; but He Himself, turning the saying at once into a general one, called those blessed who hear the word of God and keep it.<sup>2</sup> According to St. Mark's account, on one occasion the Mother with her other kinsfolk were puzzled what to make of her exalted Son. On that occasion He said: 'Who is My mother and My brethren?' and desired to recognize brother and sister and mother only in those who do the will of His heavenly Father<sup>3</sup>. Yet, on the other hand, according to St. John, she stood beside Him in His most trying hour, and His latest wish gave her another son<sup>4</sup>. Once again we find the Mother mentioned quite colourlessly together with His brothers in the circle of the Apostles<sup>5</sup>, and thereupon she disappears from history. Where the richest harmonies of apostolic piety ring in our ears, in all the letters of St. Paul, there reigns a profound silence with regard to this highly-favoured Mother, with the exception of the one reference to Christ as born of a woman, without mention of the name<sup>6</sup>. The Apocalypse of St. John, which proclaims the supramundane and mundane future of Christianity, shows us the Lamb, 'as though it had been slain,' ruling the world upon His throne, girt by the tens of thousands of the faithful who sing His praises, and shows the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb graven upon the twelve foundation-stones of the new heavenly Jerusalem<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> John ii. 3 f.<sup>2</sup> Luke xi. 27 f.<sup>3</sup> Mark iii. 31 ff.<sup>4</sup> John xix. 25 f.<sup>5</sup> Acts i. 14.<sup>6</sup> Gal. iv. 4.<sup>7</sup> Rev. v. 6, xxi. 14.



Of Mary there is not a word. Let people carefully reflect what a position she must have assumed according to the Catholic representation in this exalted apostolic picture. In this, according to the Catholic belief, Jesus appears to have shown but little of the conduct of a good son, in that He caused no notice to be taken of her world-wide glory, and left it to be devised at a future time by the imagination of men who were somewhat untrustworthy in historical matters.

The brethren of Jesus, mentioned several times in the Gospels, might no doubt be a sister's children or sons of Joseph by an earlier marriage; but as they are usually mentioned along with His Mother<sup>1</sup>, as St. John adduces it as something strange that His brethren did not believe on Him<sup>2</sup>, while, on the other hand, we find cousins of our Lord among the Apostles<sup>3</sup>, as the comment of the neighbours at Nazareth runs: 'Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?'<sup>4</sup> it looks as though they were equivalent to actual children of the same parents. St. Matthew sets forth with the utmost frankness that He might have had such<sup>5</sup>, although Protestant orthodoxy in its approximation on this point to the Catholic view, since it could not term it a heresy, called it a coarse conception; but the

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xii. 46; Mark iii. 31; Luke viii. 19; John ii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> John vii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> 'James the son of Alphaeus' (Matt. x. 3) has been identified by many with 'James the Lord's brother' (in the sense of cousin, Gal. i. 19); cp. 'Levi (= Matthew) the son of Alphaeus' (very doubtfully identified with the 'Clopas' whose wife may have been sister of the Virgin, John xix. 25) of Mark ii. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii. 55 f.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. i. 25.



Evangelists plainly regarded it otherwise. Accordingly in Holy Scripture there is absolutely no trace of her appointment to be the Virgin Queen of heaven.

It was possible to think—and the thought has had its share in the formation of the Catholic belief—that the Almighty Son of God chose only a created being consecrated from the very commencement for this purpose, and to that end miraculously endowed, in order by means of her person to enter this earthly existence, and to receive from her His human part. This would also be in consonance with a Protestant conception, for what Catholic theology adds as to the merits of Mary, that she consented to become a mother, and so Redemption became possible (inasmuch as this theology knows nothing of the mystery of love or of wholly unmerited Divine favour in its fullness), possesses very little meaning. Her act, or rather the event which occurred to her, is merely that which is common to her sex, and according to the view of theologians it was also exempt from being purchased with the pangs involved in this fulfilment of the *primaeval* blessing.<sup>1</sup> If this one Mother not only realized that all generations would call her blessed, but also was raised above all creatures by spiritual exaltation, and by her influence as a mother over her Divine Son, even this would merely be a matter to be regarded as the manifestation of the grace of God in her case, the 'blessed among women,' and the 'highly favoured'.<sup>2</sup> But in the domain of abstract thought apart from history the opposite is also conceivable. An old popular biography of Jesus avouches that our Lord allowed Himself to be led by the devil to the high mountain, and so to be

<sup>1</sup> Gen. iii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Luke i. 42, 28.



touched by this unclean monster. Moreover, He permitted Himself to be crucified by the sacrilegious hands of evildoers. In accordance with this it might be said that it appertained to God the Son's condition of self-abasement, (not in the sense in which the stately Pharisee regarded that virtue<sup>1</sup>), in His utter humility to choose simply an insignificant created being as mother, in order that here too the powerlessness of man and the glory of God might be made manifest.

The slender traces supplied by the history involve no preponderance of probability on either side of the question. She may have been just a simple, pure child of the people, who as mother transmitted to her firstborn a gracious share of kindness, mother-wit, and submission to God's will, guarded His boyish years (like Monica<sup>2</sup> but without her anxieties) from the blight of evil and coarseness, but perhaps soon gazed up with wonder at her exalted Son, and already laid by and pondered in her heart the words of the Boy whose depth of thought she could not sound.

If the Catholic tradition has made her into a goddess (for that is what in fact she became for the Middle Ages, and she is so still for individual circles, whose thoughts are represented by the Viceroy of God for the time being<sup>3</sup> in the words: 'I fear nought; I have the Madonna on my side'), yet it may be pleaded by way of excuse that it is really only the Son who is honoured in the Mother, that it is Christ to whom they give the name Mary, that it is love to Him which clothes itself in this poetry, that her cult is the religion of love and of suffering, as at Milan

<sup>1</sup> Luke vii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to the then Pope, Pius IX.



a church called by her name bears the inscription, 'Dedicated to love and grief.'

Nevertheless it is by no means an indifferent matter as regards the moral value of piety, under what name and conception the God who administers the universe is invoked and venerated. Those who call Him Jahve<sup>1</sup>, or Allah, or Brahma, or Zeus, or Ormuzd, certainly all at bottom intend the same One God, whom no name describes, and no conception comprehends: nevertheless we distinguish religions in the main in accordance with their conception of God, and who is there disposed to doubt whether the law of the Old Testament would have punished the cult of Mary as idolatry, as Mohammedanism persists in regarding it to be? Moreover it will not readily happen that any one has in a marked manner assumed 'Our Lady' as his guardian goddess without laying claim for his own benefit to a certain partiality and some of the frailties of her sex, and especially without detracting somewhat from the true God and His exalted and only Son. In the instruction of the Jesuits for their novices it is said with reference to the Litany of the holy Virgin: 'There is no prayer in which more motives are brought to bear upon God's heart which must move His compassion.' When a Catholic soldier in Silesia, who had hitherto zealously discharged all his religious duties, was discovered in possession of stolen church property, and maintained that the holy Virgin had presented it to him, it was of course only a piece of raillery on the part

<sup>1</sup> The conjecturally corrected pronunciation of that name of God which from motives of reverence fell out of use among the Jews, and appears in our Bible under the form Jehovah. The remaining four names belong respectively to the Mohammedan, the Hindu, the ancient Greek, and the Zoroastrian forms of faith.



of Frederick the Great to inquire of a Catholic authority whether that was really possible? and when the person questioned could not deny the possibility, the Virgin's favourite was forbidden, on pain of making acquaintance with the switch, to accept presents from her in future. There is an Italian proverb which has to do with people who kindle one light for the Madonna and another for the devil. An assassin, dispatched against William of Orange, bore upon his person the promise in writing to provide a new robe for our Lady of Guadalupe<sup>1</sup> and a crown for our Lady of Montserrat<sup>2</sup>, where the gate of heaven is, if the attempt was successful. This of course does not belong to the cult of Mary, but it is consistent with it. The finery worn by the figures of the Madonna, not merely the silver and gold hearts which are offered, those harmless symbols which Joseph II<sup>3</sup> caused to be removed, but idle feminine finery, necklaces of jewels and golden bracelets—in southern countries even in the present day at times a valuable possession—along with brocaded garments, cause such a figure which represents the local Madonna readily to appear venal. Moreover, it shows an approximation to heathenism that wherever an ancient and sacred figure of Mary is owned, the Madonna or little Madonna venerated in this spot assumes in the popular fancy a special individuality, as *the* Mary of Loretto<sup>4</sup>, of Einsiedeln<sup>5</sup>, of Guadalupe, of Seville<sup>6</sup>, of La Salette<sup>7</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> In the province of Caceres (formerly part of Estremadura), Spain.

<sup>2</sup> A mountain about thirty miles NW. of Barcelona (Spain), with a monastery (founded in 880) renowned for its image of the Virgin.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 71.

<sup>4</sup> A small town in the province of Ancona with a church containing what is reputed to be the actual house of the Virgin.

<sup>5</sup> A town in the canton of Schwyz, Switzerland, a famous pilgrim resort.

<sup>6</sup> Capital of the Spanish province of that name.

<sup>7</sup> See p. 116.



of Altötting<sup>1</sup>, and so on, for all those who have become local and individual Madonnas, of whom perhaps as many could be got together as Varro<sup>2</sup> counted of Jupiters, viz. three hundred; while, on the other hand, the non-bestowal of their expected help is accounted for by local distance and limitations caused thereby. In the civil war of Switzerland in 1847 the Jesuits promised to the cantons of the 'Sonderbund'<sup>3</sup>, by way of ensuring their safety, besides the miraculous copper coins, certain help from our Lady of Einsiedeln. When the Catholic forces were utterly routed at Gislicon<sup>4</sup>, they pleaded as excuse that precisely on that day the holy Virgin unfortunately had pressing business far away in Mexico. Chateaubriand<sup>5</sup> related of his pilgrimage how, on an Austrian ship in the Adriatic sea on the occasion of a storm, a lamp was lighted before a figure of the holy Virgin, and how this little lamp in front of the blessed figure exercised more power in calming people's feelings than the whole of philosophy. One would not of course expect philosophy to exert much influence over sailors, and the belief may be found an agreeable one that power has been given to a gentle lady over the stormy ocean; but a reasonable amount of reflection, at least upon *terra firma*, will concede that this control over the raging sea is an unsupported conceit, and that that harmless lamp would give just the same amount of help as the ringing of bells, practised in former days even in

<sup>1</sup> A small town in upper Bavaria with an image of the Virgin which, it is claimed, works miracles.

<sup>2</sup> See Tertullian, *Apolog.* c. 14. [H.] Marcus Terentius Varro was the famous Roman scholar and author; d. circ. 27 B. C.

<sup>3</sup> A league of most of the Roman Catholic cantons of Switzerland in favour of the Jesuits. It was formed in 1843, and overthrown by the Swiss Confederation in 1848.

<sup>4</sup> A village between Zug and Lucerne.

<sup>5</sup> See p. 48.



Protestant countries, on the occasion of heavy thunderstorms. All the Catholic notions of external aid by means of the mighty Lady who sits by the side of God on behalf of her favourites, with all its petty stories, true or fictitious—how these go to pieces when misfortune in tragic severity bursts in! It was at the great festival in honour of Mary, which was celebrated in the cathedral of Santiago<sup>1</sup> by the numerous congregation of the 'daughters of Mary', when all the tinsel glories of this festival ignited, and over two thousand, mostly women and children, were helplessly consumed. We are far from seeing in this anything else than the carrying out of the unfathomable counsels of God by means of the pitiless powers of nature. But the question is a pressing one for all Catholic people, 'Why did so good a Mother not prevent such immense suffering?' and that too on the occasion of the keeping of a great festival in honour of her new dignity!' The subterfuge of a Jesuit: 'The Mother of God desired to take her devoted children to herself, and the city had reason to rejoice in this burnt-offering, for Chili was in much need of a large supply of martyrs', must have been a bitter mockery in the eyes of the weeping relatives, who found only charred bodies and heaps of ashes.

Protestant nations, through the antagonism produced by Catholic exaggeration, have for a long time regarded the Mother of our Lord with coolness. But we do not deny that the Divine Son is also honoured in His Mother. We hold her precious in her simple Biblical reality as well as in her glorification by art. It

<sup>1</sup> Santiago de Compostela in the province of Corunna, Spain, is famous since the ninth century as claiming to contain the relics of St. James, son of Zebedee. The author is referring to the destruction of the church of La Compania, Santiago, Chili, Dec. 8, 1863.



is a matter of training, not of a particular form of piety, and our youthful maidens, paying but little regard to the dogma itself, readily sing the beautiful melody :

O most holy, O most pious, Mary, sweet virgin,  
Mother beloved, undefiled, pray, pray for us.

### B. The Immaculate Conception

Catholic pronouncements reached their climax in our own day by means of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, i. e. that, as the condition of her complete freedom from sin, she was begotten without the taint of original guilt.

Holy Scripture has naturally no occasion to speak of a sin on the part of the Mother of our Lord. As for what has been regarded as such by Protestant exponents of Scripture, that she neglected her most sacred duty towards God in the care of her Divine Son, when on the journey back from Jerusalem she allowed Him out of her sight for a whole day ;<sup>1</sup> such harmless motives may be thought of for this lack of anxiety that only a strong inclination in that direction could pronounce that there was anything wrong here. There is more force in the remark that the perplexity of the Mother with regard to her exalted Son in the midst of His work<sup>2</sup> points, although not absolutely to sinfulness with reference to the Son of man, yet to an ill-humour hardly altogether devoid of guilt, which could give occasion for the mischievous suggestion which she made. For that the Mother had merely come with the others on account of the evil reports concerning Him in order, as Olshausen thought, to draw comfort for herself from His company, or, as Neander, to soften down what was an offence in the view of his relations, there is no hint in the context of

<sup>1</sup> Luke ii. 44.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 125.



that narrative, and reverence for the Divine Word does not permit of our inventing anything even with good intentions. St. Paul, where he testifies that all men since Adam have sinned<sup>1</sup>, and that God has included all under sin<sup>2</sup>, excepted only the One who brought redemption. Roman theology disposes very simply of this saying. The decision of Trent declined to allow that it has any force in relation to the Virgin! The proof passage adduced by Rome, however, is the Lord's expression used to the serpent: 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: *it* shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.'<sup>3</sup> The Romish Version, in opposition to the Hebrew text and the context of the passage, reads 'she' (the woman), and, the prophecy being thus made expressly to refer to Mary and only indirectly to Christ, there is constructed thus a proof of the Immaculate Conception, viz. the enmity set up by God between Mary and Satan must, it is plain, be unconditional and eternal; but this would not be the case, if the holy Virgin ever incurred original sin.

That primaeval utterance of God certainly is not merely to be taken as a remark of trifling importance like the enmity between men and serpents, which, according to Perrone, is all that rationalism can see in it. It is, on the contrary, simply a type of the universal conflict carried on between the human spirit and the hostile powers of nature, and, further, of its moral elevation above the temptations of evil spirits; and the prophecy accordingly finds its highest fulfilment in the Son of God through the victory accruing from His death. But even granting that it is Mary who is intended in the first instance as bruising the serpent's

<sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 10; v. 12.<sup>2</sup> Gal. iii. 22.<sup>3</sup> Gen. iii. 15.



head, according to representations of her in early and thoughtfully conceived likenesses, nevertheless the enmity towards the latter would be none the less absolute and perpetual, if she had entered the sinful fellowship of humanity, whether from the moment of her conception, or up to the time when the Crucified One redeemed her too. That inherent taint would all the same be only the prick in the heel, in fulfilment of the Scripture passage. Further, two other Biblical proofs were found in the expressions of affection in the Song of Solomon: 'Thou art all fair, my love; and there is no spot in thee, . . . a garden shut up is my sister, . . . a fountain sealed<sup>1</sup>.'

Earlier Church Fathers, on the basis of the Scripture passages we have considered, spoke without hesitation of the shortcomings of Mary, of her ill-timed precipitancy at the marriage of Cana<sup>2</sup>, as well as of her temporary estrangement; while they nevertheless were willing to regard some other human beings as sinless. But when St. Augustine, by means of his dogma as to original sin, attached overwhelming inherent guilt to every child of man, and thus first made this whole question possible, he with a modest reverence avoided the expression of the consequences of his assertion in respect to the holy Virgin, whom, however, he by no means considered to be free from original sin.<sup>3</sup>

Thus her Immaculate Conception, for at least the space of eight hundred years, remained unrecognized by the Church. When at length it came to be talked of, and by the extension of an older festival of the Conception to the festival of the Immaculate Con-

<sup>1</sup> Cant. iv. 7, 12.    <sup>2</sup> Iren. III. 16. 7; Tert. *de carne Christi*, c. 7. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *De natura et gratia*, c. 42. [H.]



ception in the twelfth century made itself popular through the instrumentality of a local festival in the south of France<sup>1</sup>, it was opposed by the saint of that day, 'the last of the Church Fathers,' St. Bernard of Clairvaux<sup>2</sup>, as an innovation at variance with the custom of the Church, with reason, and tradition. The most spiritual of all the scholastics, with regard to whose chief work Christ (i. e. as continuing to speak by the voice of His Church), pronounced thus: 'Thou hast well spoken concerning Me, my good Thomas!'—this *believing* Thomas as decidedly opposed it<sup>3</sup>; and the most distinguished representatives of the theology of the Middle Ages were in agreement with him, until Duns Scotus<sup>4</sup>, his younger rival, who in other matters not unfrequently approaches the precipice of heresy, came forward as champion of the immaculate Virgin. The Order of the Dominicans, the stern guardians of orthodoxy so long as they had power, never ceased, in imitation of their saint Thomas, to oppose this Immaculate Conception, which perhaps on that very account became the favourite dogma of the other great mendicant Order, the Franciscans. In conjunction with them the University of Paris interposed the authority of their learning on the side of this matter affecting the honour of the holy Virgin, inasmuch as they made every academic dignity conditional upon the recognition of it by oath. German universities also introduced a similar oath, which, in

<sup>1</sup> There the Feast of the Immaculate Conception was at that time established on December 8.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* 174 *ad can. Lugd.* [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Summa theol.* III, qu. 22, art. 1-3. [H.]

<sup>4</sup> A famous scholastic, founder of the system called Scotism, in opposition to Thomism (that of Aquinas). He taught at Oxford and afterwards at Paris, and received the title *Doctor Subtilis*, from the ingenuity of his disputation on the Immaculate Conception; d. circ. 1308.



the case of Austria and in fact of the emperor himself, was only abolished at the instance of Joseph II in 1782. In Spain that mysterious birth became so popular that not unfrequently girls receive the baptismal name of *Immaculata Conceptione*, which it is devoutly to be hoped, if it were only for maidenly considerations, they bear in an abbreviated and unintelligible form. Nevertheless, the consciousness that in this case it is not a tradition received from the early Fathers, but a new doctrine that is in question, was so powerful that the famous chancellor of the University of Paris, Gerson<sup>1</sup> (in 1401) declared in plain words that this truth has been of late for the first time revealed and established both by miracles and learned authorities.

Towards the close of the Middle Ages almost the whole Church was at times split into the two hostile camps of the rival mendicant Orders. The French section of the Papacy was for the Immaculate Conception, the Roman against it. Moreover, on both sides there was no lack of supernatural attestation. The Swedish prophetess, St. Birgitta<sup>2</sup>, maintained that the Mother of God herself appeared and revealed to her that 'it is true that I was conceived without original sin'. On the other hand, the saint of the Dominicans, Catharine of Siena<sup>3</sup>, was made to testify that it was not till *after* the Conception by the Holy Spirit that the Virgin was purified from the stain of original sin. For the different views approximated so nearly that the debate was as to the moment, so to speak, whether at or after the Conception; and yet they carried on the

<sup>1</sup> Jean Charlier de Gerson, prominent at the Councils of Pisa and Constance; d. 1429.

<sup>2</sup> A nun, related to the royal family of Sweden, who founded an Order in 1370; d. 1373, canonized 1391.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 35.



conflict for centuries. The Council of Basel<sup>1</sup> decided for the Franciscans, but this was at the time (1439) of its quarrel with the Papacy, which was not re-adjusted. The disciples of St. Dominic thought fit to support their maintenance of the non-supernatural side of the question by supernatural means, inasmuch as they caused a figure of Mary to shed tears of blood, and saints to present themselves with a letter from heaven against the Immaculate Conception; nay, the holy Virgin herself was made to appear and brand upon a deluded person the stigmata of Christ as an evidence of her *non-immaculate* Conception! The deception was discovered, and four Dominicans were burnt on that account by sentence of the papal tribunal at Berne, on the eve of the Reformation.

The Franciscans had already obtained a Pope out of their number, Sixtus IV<sup>2</sup>, who bestowed his blessing upon the festival of the Immaculate Conception and a lavish indulgence upon all those devoutly taking part in this solemnity, and, further, laid under excommunication those preachers and writers who did not cease to proclaim that it was a heresy and deadly sin to believe in the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. Nevertheless, owing to the necessities of his position as Pope, he threatened with similar punishment those who ventured to brand the opposite belief (viz. that the honoured Virgin was conceived with original guilt) as a heresy or mortal sin, inasmuch as on this point nothing was as yet decided by the Roman Church. Moreover the majority at Trent, constrained by the contending Orders of monks, recognized the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Francesco della Rovere, Pope, 1471-84. He built the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican.



necessity of this neutral position, and their decree with regard to original sin, which set forth its transmission to the whole human race, had the addition made to it at its close, that it is not the intention of the Council to include in this decree the immaculate Virgin Mary, but that it desires in this respect to abide by the ordinances of the late Pope, Sixtus IV.<sup>1</sup> The same line was followed by many Popes afterwards, some of them with an evident leaning to the Franciscan dogma, yet taking care at the same time to guard the opposite tenets of the Dominicans from the charge of heresy. Pius V<sup>2</sup>, while prohibiting this contentious question from being brought before the people in the pulpit or in books, yet did not forbid the learned to dispute about it in Latin. The festival of the Conception of Mary spread itself with less controversy, inasmuch as even the opponents of the Immaculate *Conception* explained it to themselves as the first greeting of the entrance of the never sullied *Virgin* into existence, the greeting of the morning star before the sunrise; and the last-named Pope, who was of Dominican origin, gave this signification a legal position, since he appointed the liturgy of this festival to be simply for the Conception, dropping the word *Immaculata*, which was only exceptionally conceded to the Franciscans.

The interests which the Reformation pursued were too great for it to have any in this conflict. The Franciscan view possessed powerful advocates in the Jesuits. Clement XIV<sup>3</sup>, who sacrificed the Jesuits, nevertheless, as it was the view of his Order and accorded with the wishes of the king of Spain, would readily have proclaimed the Immaculate Conception

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio V.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Michele Ghislieri, Pope, 1566-72.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 100.



as a dogma. He did not venture it. Even in his day there was a fear of the scorn of the world. Since then *penchants* of this sort subsided in presence of the serious issues of more modern times, until Pius IX, in his Encyclical of February, 1849, promised finally to bring to a conclusion the proceedings of a thousand years with regard to the Immaculate Conception, in order to carry out the latest wishes of the Church. To this end all the bishops of the Catholic Church were required to inform the Holy Father in writing, what attitude the devotion of their faithful flocks takes towards the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, and what they themselves, the bishops, thought as to such a decision on this subject. This Encyclical issuing from Gaeta<sup>1</sup> belongs to the time when the Pope's heart sorrowfully turned from his country's hopes to supra-mundane imaginings. With the customary thoroughness in point of formalities, where the matter in hand concerns a great ecclesiastical decision, preliminary steps were taken in congregations. The judgements of the bishops on the part of a large majority of them came to hand. Each of them knew what sort of reply the Holy Father desired. The answers were for the most part in harmony as regards the Pope's belief, but German and French bishops in particular expressed nevertheless very serious hesitation as to the advisability and opportuneness of the dogmatic decision contemplated. Acquiescing bishops, 'from all nations' according to the expression used, were in 1854 invited to Rome to attend a papal Council; a meeting consisting of four private sessions was held by 134 bishops with the cardinals and five theological assessors. Some objections, at least with

<sup>1</sup> Where he took refuge 1848-50.



reference to the need and formal legality of this decision, may have been made or even refuted; at any rate Catholic accounts boasted that reasoning and criticism, and every source of knowledge, were summoned to their aid. Yet in the decisive session on November 24 the assembled prelates exclaimed, it is said, unanimously: 'Holy Peter, instruct us; strengthen thy brother!' Now they had the instruction already in their hands, each his copy of the Bull deciding the matter, a copious treatise of edifying scholasticism, which in the general glorification of the Holy Virgin, with all the appellations and allegories in former time bestowed upon her by devotion and poetry, desires to demonstrate that her Immaculate Conception is contained in Divine revelation, and has always been believed in the Church; notwithstanding that nothing could be adduced as a basis for this except that it was not fitting that the Mother of Him whose sonship she shared with the Divine Father, this chosen vessel, should be subject to the inherited evil otherwise common to all men. The opposition to this doctrine, so powerful in former time, is only betrayed so far as to assume the aspect of labour early and late on the part of the predecessors of the Pope to spread this saving teaching among the nations. The declaration was made on the befitting day sacred to Mary, December 8<sup>1</sup>, with all solemnity in St. Peter's, when after high mass and the singing of *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, Pius IX, with deep emotion, and interrupted only by sobs, publicly read the closing sentences of the Bull: 'To the glory of the Blessed Trinity, to do homage to the Virgin Mother of God, to the exaltation of the Catholic faith, and the growth of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 136.



the Christian religion, out of the plenary powers of our Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, and our own, we declare and determine that the doctrine which maintains that the most blessed Virgin Mary in the first moment of her conception by means of special favour and pre-eminence on the part of Almighty God, having regard to the merits of Christ Jesus, the Redeemer of mankind, was preserved free from every stain of original sin—that this, we say, is revealed by God and therefore must be believed firmly and steadfastly by all believing people. Thus, if some—which God forbid!—should venture to be of a different opinion, let them perceive and know henceforward that through their own decision they have condemned themselves, have suffered shipwreck in the faith, and are apostates from the unity of the Church, and further by their act itself have incurred the penalties justly appointed, if they venture to set forth openly what they are thinking in their hearts by word of mouth or in writing or in any sort of public fashion.’

With reference to the reception of the new dogma we heard high-flown language : ‘ The eighth of December will ever remain noteworthy in the history of the Church. A conflict on dogma which had dragged on for centuries was adjusted on this day. A decision for which centuries had yearned was given by the Church. What our forbears in old days so eagerly longed for, it has been granted to us to live to see. Peter has spoken by his successor. The rock that never shakes, upon which the Church of God is built, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail, is the source of the new rule of faith. The whole Christian world rejoices in the honour done to its Queen and



Mother. Holy joy penetrates across the desert to the forests of America, away to the dungeons of furthest Asia through the torture racks and doors of iron, and lights up the face of the savage as of the European, of the Mongol as of the negro; and it is only heresy which gnashes its teeth in sullen mood, because it is unable to check the triumph of the Virgin. Heaven itself shouts for joy, and the jubilation rings from cloud to cloud, from star to star, and the angels and the saints sing a new song to their Queen.' At some episcopal seats great Church festivals were held on the next anniversary to celebrate the papal dogma. In Rome the Government erected an artistic memorial as a permanent souvenir: a lofty antique pillar of greenish marble, to which perhaps appertained other memories borne by it in former days. Upon it stood the Virgin without the Child, her hand raised over the eternal city in an attitude of blessing. At the foot of the pillar as the witnesses to her Conception in prophetic Revelation were Moses, David, Isaiah, and Ezekiel, statues of white marble exceeding life size. It stands on a fitting spot, on the Piazza di Spagna, in front of the palazzo of the Propaganda. The work of Roman sculptors, it is not particularly successful artistically considered, but it makes a stately impression, and where the gilded metal statue of the Virgin stands out in relief against the blue sky, it has quite an imposing as well as pleasing aspect. Also in the choir of St. Peter's there is a brazen tablet let into the wall, which declares that Pius IX, by solemnly proclaiming this dogmatic decision on December 8, 1854, fulfilled the longing desire of the whole Catholic world.

If the Pope really believed this, he was deceived



by those who told him what he dearly wished to hear. It was only the indifference of the Catholic nations towards the new dogma which made it possible for it to be carried through without any particular scandal. We merely heard of some chaplains and abbés who spoke against it, and were ordered out of the holy city, deprived, or excommunicated. The Episcopate submitted with laudations or in silence; even the sons of St. Dominic, already weakened by sundry defections from their hereditary doctrine on the point, which they had formerly so passionately defended, appeared so crushed that they bore quietly the triumph of the Jesuits, and merely held back from any share in the Roman celebrations. The general body of the faithful deemed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, since it was offered to them as a primitive belief, to be the belief that the Holy Virgin as such conceived her Divine Son, and perhaps accounted to itself for the Holy Father's solemnly renewing so ancient a pronouncement in consideration of the prevalent unbelief. The mass of the educated in the Catholic Church know so little about original sin, and pay so small attention to it, that the privilege of being conceived and born without it may appear to them a thing which they are only too ready to credit.

Of 'heresy's gnashing of its teeth in sullen mood' hardly anything was heard; nothing moreover of the flapping of the wings of birds of night, as they flew away dazzled by the light of the Roman dogma; but it came to our knowledge that there were many smiles, and we shared the surprise at the lack of serious thought on the part of both old and new Rome on the occasion of this whole business. Not as though the Pope could have given the opposite decision, but



the wonder was that he pronounced a decision upon this belief at all. Moreover, in the acts which are subject to human choice there is carried out an historical law, which in cases like the present takes the form that that opinion, by means of which what is once recognized as a subject for religious veneration is exalted, appears the more pious one. This natural exaltation of the cult of Mary is in one way owing to a certain readiness to follow Christ's pattern. On the other hand, there militates against it the uneasiness which attaches to placing a child of man on terms of equality with the God-Man. After this uneasiness had once been expressed by distinguished authorities of the mediaeval Church in decided hostility to an ominous comparison of Mary's genesis with the august Incarnation of the Son of God, it could never conduce to the interests of the Catholic Church to set itself against such hostility by means of a dogma proclaimed to be infallible. Pius IX ventured the whole authority of the Papacy in matters of faith upon this dogma, which actually finds no support in Holy Scripture, and nothing better than indirect opposition on the part of St. Paul. It cannot even appeal to an ancient and uniform tradition, and offers absolutely nothing for edification except perhaps the hope of flattering the vanity of a celestial lady who, in consideration of receiving such honour from the Church militant, is to render solemn proofs of her powerful intercession; as Cardinal Patrizi assured the people of Rome in his capacity as General Vicar, when he invited them to celebrate 'the thrice blessed day on which she herself desires by the action of the Viceroy of Christ to publish to the world her Immaculate Conception'. What was the basis of the conflict to which



up to this time the Church was subjected, where there was a most distinct ranging against one another of the opinions of the Franciscans and of the Dominicans? It was owing to the fact that the dogma forces into prominence the thought of that which otherwise even among uncivilized peoples a delicate modesty leaves out of mind. According to the former Order, by virtue of a miracle wrought by the Holy Spirit upon the bodies and souls of those through whom Mary came into existence, she was conceived in her mother's womb without inheriting the sin of Adam even in the shape of any kind of germ of sinful desire. According to the other Order, the Holy Spirit at the moment following the Conception purified from original guilt the loosened and fructified *ovum*, a transparent bubble, the germ of the future human being. Did then the Pope receive a Divine revelation, enabling him to know the one or the other to be certainly true? For all the human instrumentalities of congregations, cardinals, and bishops could do no more than be uncertain about this matter of fact which either took place or did not take place almost two thousand years before, and in any event must have taken place in the most invisible secrecy. In 1854 an appeal could not yet be made to the Pope's infallibility. To speak frankly, even subsequently to 1870 this could not be done, for even now this dogma plainly does not rest upon Holy Scripture or uniform tradition. The whole audacious undertaking, this summoning of well-disposed bishops to a sham Council, this solemn promulgation of a dogma of binding spiritual force, begins to be intelligible if the Immaculate condition of the Virgin was an experiment, an *arviso*, with a view to the infallibility of the Pope. No doubt Pius himself seems in the



most artless fashion to have merely pursued his inclination to glorify her whom from the first he held in his youthful affections, and to commend himself to her mighty protection. But those who did not advise him to the contrary may have been longer sighted, or even in the indifference with which believers and unbelievers received the new dogma they may have perceived the opportunity for achieving the more important issue, and so have struck out the momentous path which led to the 18th of July<sup>1</sup>. The older Popes, even where they adopted the opinion of the Franciscans, nevertheless expressly forbid the declaration of the opposite opinion to be sinful or heretical. The Council of Trent put forth that wise direction. Pius IX directs the contrary. Protestantism has been called the subjective side of Christianity, and not without justification, so far as it makes the believer look deeply into himself, and places him in charge of his own conscience. But where is the subjective of less account, or where does the arbitrariness of individual inclinations come more nakedly and incautiously to the light of day, than in this course of action, which springs from unlimited power on the part of a hierarchy? The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was rejected by learned and holy Church teachers. This rejection was by virtue of solemn decrees of the highest Church authorities recognized as permissible as late as the morning of December 8, 1854. From the subsequent afternoon onwards this rejection brings with it exclusion from the Church to which alone belongs salvation, and this is henceforward to all eternity to hold good as an infallible truth, merely because it was the

<sup>1</sup> The date (in 1870) on which the decisive vote on the Pope's infallibility was taken in the Vatican Council.



favourite opinion of a pious and unfortunate Pope. The intelligence, however, even of followers of Catholicism must have found difficulties here. Therefore this latest development of a myth which has come to be the popular type and essential feature of Roman Catholicism (so that the Jew in his pride could say: 'The Christians in the north venerate a Jew, in the south a Jewess') can easily at some time turn round as a destructive force against a form of Christianity which in fact belongs not to the south but to the past.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE SACRAMENTS

#### A. Seven in number.

FROM the universal representation of the reserve and Divine character inherent in the *mysterium*<sup>1</sup> and *Sacramentum*<sup>2</sup>, the former title of Greek, the latter of Roman origin, there has been developed very gradually from the fourth century onwards the selection of some acts of ecclesiastical worship as specially sacred, and at length through scholasticism the conception of the Sacrament as a material token of Divine appointment which indicates, involves, and communicates Divine grace.

During the long period that the conception was indefinite there could be no discussion as to the importance of a particular number. In the days of the Fathers, however, Baptism and the Lord's Supper were regarded sometimes as the sole Sacraments, sometimes as merely the chief ones, indicated and sanctioned by the water and the blood from the wound in the side of our Lord. Moreover, having regard to the Sacraments of the Old Testament<sup>3</sup>, as those which proclaimed the coming Messiah, there was no inducement to multiply them. When they began to be classed and numbered, they varied from those two to twelve, and, alongside of this, an indefinite number. The number seven began to prevail in the West in the

<sup>1</sup> A sacred rite, revealed only to the initiated.

<sup>2</sup> A military oath.

<sup>3</sup> Circumcision and the Passover.



twelfth century, was approved by the Greek Church at the Council of Florence without opposition, and was confirmed at Trent as being all of them appointed by Christ.

Protestantism after some vacillation retained only the two great Sacraments of the early Church as *her* Sacraments, on the ground that they alone are appointed by Christ and present to us natural matter bearing a supernatural import.

The Catholic number *seven* arose from the fact that sacred acts of something like that amount, which more or less entered into worship, were reckoned up to this number, which from early days onwards was considered significant in a good or evil sense. An example of the one is the seven stars in the hand of the Son of man, of the other the seven heads of the beast in the Apocalypse<sup>1</sup>. Had it not been for this sacred playing upon numbers, an individual one such as marriage, of which it could not without something of subtilty be maintained that it was first appointed by Christ as a Sacrament, might perhaps have been left out, and another, like washing of the feet, admitted, which possesses so certain a symbolic character and such clear institution. It is expressly recognized by St. Bernard as the Sacrament of the forgiveness of daily sins. It was at that time solemnized annually in monasteries and in royal palaces, and is still carried out in Rome, not only by the Pope on thirteen aged pilgrims on Thursday in Holy Week, but in a still more edifying and serious manner after the custom of the apostolic Church, as a pious work of lay persons, on every evening of Easter week in the hospital of the Holy Spirit in

<sup>1</sup> Rev. i. 16; xii. 3.



the same city, upon the pilgrims who come there. Alongside of these there might have been instituted a royal Sacrament, the anointing of the monarch in accordance with Old Testament precedent. As this was done on the occasion of the coronation of the ruler of the Romano-German Empire by the Pope or in later times by the spiritual Electors, and as in the case of the kingdom of France there was the further element consisting of the myth of the flask of anointing oil which was brought by a dove from heaven, it would be, even if mixed now with a drop of democratic oil, a significant representation of monarchy by the grace of God.

The Catholic statement desires to base itself upon tradition, demonstrating that, as early as the Fathers, all seven Sacraments were admitted. But they differed individually. One reckoned this, another that; and others were introduced, as the salt upon the lips of Catechumens, exorcism, monastic vows, or mysteries of quite a different kind, as the Incarnation, Crucifixion, and Resurrection of the Lord; but in the first millenary of the Church (which after all is the crucial point) they are nowhere grouped as seven, not even in those writings which deal expressly with the Sacraments. The appeal to the old Churches of the East, which since the fifth century have been separated from the Greek orthodox Church, on the ground that they had the seven Sacraments, maintains a thing which is not proven. In their ancient Confessions of Faith there is not to be found a trace of such a settled number. It is not indeed to be expected that there should be, since even the last writer on dogmatics in the Greek Church, John of Damascus<sup>1</sup> in the eighth

<sup>1</sup> Born at Damascus, d. circ. 760.



century, merely deals separately with Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and, side by side with these, with the Cross, without grouping them under any common conception. But this is quite possible, that Roman missionaries may have talked over some Nestorian<sup>1</sup> or Jacobite priests<sup>2</sup> in Asia and Abyssinia into accepting seven Sacraments.

The proof sought for, from the days of St. Thomas Aquinas to those of Möhler, to establish a certain necessity in the matter, viz. that these seven and none others, like a chaplet of flowers, encircle man's life, sanctifying it in the critical stages of its development, is precisely as reasonable as when St. Chrysostom adduced his proof that there were only two Sacraments: 'By the water we are regenerated, by the flesh and blood of the Lord we are nourished,'<sup>3</sup> or the older Lutheran writers on dogmatics with similar arbitrariness: 'The birth and clothing of religious life are bestowed through Baptism, its nourishment and cure through the Lord's Supper: what need is there of more?'

But Protestantism, when it has come to understand itself and brought back the Sacraments to their first intention, viz. to be the supremely sacred acts of Church worship in a material form, will not contend greatly with regard to the addition to their number. It will even naturally find that that Church which loves the outward impression made by worship attaches itself to a richer adornment of such sacred symbols than the essentially spiritual Church, although the latter

<sup>1</sup> See p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> A sect of Christians in Syria, Mesopotamia, and elsewhere, originally an offshoot of the Monophysites (condemned by the sixth general Council at Constantinople, 680). It was called after Jacobus Baradaeus, a Syrian, made bishop of Edessa, circ. 541.

<sup>3</sup> *In Joh. Hom.* 84. [H.]



also, recognizing the sensuous nature of man, does not scorn these celestial ladders upon which there ascend and descend, if not angels, at least religious emotions. When Goethe once threw out the opinion that the Protestant Church had too few Sacraments, and gave an ingenious explanation of the Catholic list, no suspicious Protestant detected therein a Catholic leaning. Moreover, there are three sacred acts which stand outside the conception of Sacraments among Protestant nations, and yet have almost attained the significance of Sacraments in their life. These are, Ordination, Confirmation, and Marriage. Symbolical matter might easily be assigned to them appropriately with primitive custom: the delivery of a Bible, the chrism, and the exchange of rings. They might be called Sacraments of the second order, provided that the two great Sacraments, as being those certainly ordained by Christ and in sure possession of His promise, retain their pre-eminence.

### B. Their Operation.

The operation of the Sacraments in the view of the early Church took effect as something specially supernatural, yet contingent upon the religious receptivity of the partaker. This receptivity moreover was briefly defined as faith in the Divine promise. But when later scholasticism desired to define the value of the so-called Old Testament Sacraments, as Circumcision and the Passover, in comparison with the New Testament ones, in that case, deferring to an abuse which had long prevailed in the practice of the Church, it held that the Sacraments of the Old Testament were effectual for salvation only through faith in the future Redeemer, as an *opus operans*, but that those of



the New Testament were effectual in themselves as external acts, as *opus operatum*, even without an inward pious emotion, provided only that mortal sin did not put a bar in the way of God's grace.

While Luther opposed his Gospel of *faith only* to this superstitious belief in the magical power of external actions, a belief which he found not merely restricted to blind reliance upon the Sacraments, the sacramental act appeared to him at first to be only a sign and pledge of belief, and so to be of purely subjective significance. In the first whirl of liberty he laid such stress upon the old pithy sayings of the Church which were ominous in their bearing: 'It is not the absence but the contempt of the Sacrament which condemns; God, Who can save you without the Sacraments, will not deliver you without love,' that even the use of the Sacraments was for the believer a purely optional matter. But when his power in laying the foundation of a Church came to be developed, then, by the operation of his weighty teaching with reference to the Holy Communion, it came to pass that he recovered the established tradition, that the Divine grace is not merely indicated but also imparted through the Sacrament. As early as the Catechisms, this objective significance of both Sacraments was most emphatically admitted by him and by the Church named after him, as well as by that reformed in accordance with Calvin's teaching: all this, however, on the understanding that faith is the hand which receives the sacramental gifts of grace. In this sense the Augsburg Confession<sup>1</sup> rejected the doctrine that the Sacraments justify *ex opere operato* apart from faith. The Apology<sup>2</sup> uses still more definite language: 'We condemn the whole tribe of scholastic

<sup>1</sup> *Art. XIII.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Apol.* p. 203. [H.]



teachers, who teach that to him who does not put a bar in the way the Sacraments bring grace *ex opere operato* without a good impulse on the part of the recipient. It is altogether a Jewish notion to think that we are justified by means of a ceremony without a good impulse of the heart, i. e. without faith; and yet this ungodly notion is taught with great authority in the whole of the Pope's realm.'

We learn through Chemnitz<sup>1</sup>, however, that even at the time of the Reformation, in discussions upon religion, enlightened Catholics like Gropper, the dean of the cathedral at Cologne, were ashamed of the scholastic teaching, and ascribed to it a different meaning, as though it did not assert that God imparts His grace through the Sacraments irrespective of the faith of the recipient, but only that the reality of the Sacrament is not to be measured by reference to the worthiness and merit of the minister, but in accordance with God's power, appointment, and operation. Proceeding on these lines Bellarmine teaches that the effectiveness of the Sacrament *ex opere operato* denotes only this, that the grace is imparted by virtue of the sacred act itself ordained by God to that end, not by virtue of the merit of the minister or the recipient, while yet a goodwill, faith, and repentance are needful as dispositions in the case of adults. Finally, Möhler affirms that the teaching of the Catholic Church is to the effect that to *opus operatum* we are to add in thought the words *a Christo*, i. e. that the Sacrament works as an ordinance prepared by Christ for our salvation; to receive blessing from it, however, the man must be receptive, as he is, when grieving for sin,

<sup>1</sup> Martin Chemnitz, a Lutheran theologian, d. 1586.



longing for God's help, and in a state of confiding faith.

If this had been the Catholic teaching at the time of the Reformation, the Reformers, those men full of Christ, who could never sufficiently disclaim every good thing arising from man, in order simply to receive all from Christ, would have been the last persons to gainsay it. But Duns Scotus, the same scholastic writer who was the main authority for the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception—and in this case he is so far from being in conflict with St. Thomas Aquinas that he is merely developing clearly his teaching—in strict conformity with the practice of the Church, stated the doctrine thus:<sup>1</sup> 'The Sacrament confers grace by means of the *opus operatum*, so that on the occasion of it an inward good impulse is not required, but it is enough that the recipient interposes no bar in the shape of a mortal sin.' This was the existing form of teaching. It was this which the Reformation found in possession and attacked. The Council of Trent<sup>2</sup> simply responded to the Reformers' rejection of this teaching by insisting on the effectiveness *ex opere operato*. In this way the scholastic conception of the doctrine is set forth here in full distinctness. But as opposition to religious truth can never be rigidly carried out within a Christian community, even the Catholic Church has deviated from it in dealing with individual Sacraments, while nevertheless the validity of a pious work in itself, where little is asked about the disposition from which it comes, or whether another is discharging the duty for me, is a belief that penetrates Catholic thought and practice, and in its teaching with reference to the operation of the Sacra-

<sup>1</sup> IV. 1. qu. 6. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> S. VII, de Sacr. can. 8. [H.]



ments, as a rule it has simply come to be openly admitted. That is also the reason why Protestant controversy maintains this objection so stubbornly.

If Catholic theologians in later time made this out to have a different sense, we are here to recognize the power of the Christian spirit, which could no longer endure to attach to the Sacraments, instead of their moral and religious effect, a magical one, as though enchantments for external use. Notwithstanding, they are not thereby justified in applying a new sense to the ecclesiastical records of the time that preceded them. How they may make it to be consistent with the infallibility of their Church it is for themselves to decide; but we have to take note of it, and will remember their admission that no Sacrament and no Church work in itself, simply through the fact of its being performed, is of a saving nature, but only in the event that the desire for it originates in a religious disposition (although it may still be in great need of strengthening), and that its blessing be received by that disposition. Further, we may recognize as the thought that lies, but only in a distorted form, at the root of effectiveness *ex opere operato*, that the Sacrament as a symbol, as a sacred act, and in virtue of individual application, is calculated to exercise a religious power upon a willing disposition, sometimes even upon an obstructive one and in spite of its aims, and that the pure Word of God might perhaps not have been able to exercise that power without this sensuous garment. Also, both Churches are at one in holding the necessity of the Sacraments, so far as they are intended for all, as against those who scorn them, and, moreover, as to their non-necessity in emergencies.



## C. Intention.

However much the moral impression of the Sacrament is heightened by the personal worthiness of the ministering clergyman and his claims to respect, nevertheless both Churches are agreed that the blessing is not intrinsically dependent upon the religious and moral worthiness of him who administers. In both Churches the bold expressions of St. Augustine with regard to Baptism by impure hands hold good : 'I fear not the adulterer nor the drunkard, since I look for the Holy Dove by whom I am told, "This (the Holy Spirit) is He Who is there conferring Baptism."' It was only sects and parties in both Churches from the days of the Novatianists<sup>1</sup> and Donatists<sup>2</sup> down to some branches of Pietism who, vacillating between pious timidity and spiritual pride, considered as void of effect the Sacrament, if received from the hand of a minister who was not of a conformable disposition, going perhaps so far as to hold that any communication with such a person was fraught with peril to the soul. A parallel is supplied by Gregory VII, who in the interest of the hierarchy declared the Holy Communion received from the hand of a married priest to be invalid, and thus excited the fanaticism of the people to deeds of violence at the altar. A contrary opinion, however, has arisen to the effect that the Catholic Church considers an *intention*

<sup>1</sup> Novatian (also called Novatus) was a Roman presbyter who lived in the middle of the third century. His followers seem to have refused forgiveness to all grave post-baptismal sin.

<sup>2</sup> Donatus 'the Great' (as opposed to Donatus, bp. of Casae Nigrae during the persecution of Diocletian), bishop of Carthage in 315, gave his name to an early Christian sect, who considered all baptisms, &c., as invalid, that were performed by those who were in communion with *traditores*, i.e. persons who under pressure of persecution had *surrendered* copies of the Scriptures.



(*intentio*) on the part of the priest to administer the Sacrament, whichever it be, according to the tradition of the Church, to be necessary for its effectiveness.<sup>1</sup>

On this subject St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>2</sup> drew a distinction, saying that if a person had no intention whatever of administering the Sacrament, but only of deriding it, especially in the event of his letting this be publicly known, the effectiveness of the Sacrament is thereby invalidated; but if the priest has it in view to baptize a woman in order to abuse her, or to deal out the Body of the Lord for the purpose of poisoning, the reality of the Sacrament is not invalidated by the perversity of this intention. This gives us an opportunity of seeing what people expected in the Middle Ages. In later time Catholic theology adduced the rarely mentioned distinction between *external* and *internal* intention, the former meaning the priest's desire to administer the Sacrament in the *form* usual in the Church, the latter his desire to do this with the same *meaning* as that of the Church. It is not correct to say that with regard to the first kind of intention the Catholic and Protestant Churches are at variance. Both Churches require this external fulfilment of ritual, and in both there may occur cases where it will be difficult to decide whether the defective carrying out of one or the other rite should make us regard the sacred act as not accomplished. But as to an *internal* intention, i. e. the intention of the minister in his own mind, Catholic theology is itself divided, inasmuch as the Italians with most other Catholic schools of thought maintain its necessity to the efficacy of the Sacrament,

<sup>1</sup> *Conc. Trid. S. VII, de Sacr. c. 11.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Summa*, P. III. qu. 64, art. 8. [H.]



while French theologians mostly disallow this necessity. This difference of opinion is dependent upon opposing considerations, both of them equally Catholic. On the one side the *opus operatum* requires that the sacred act, whatever may have been the intention with which it was done, has full validity, even in its naked externality. This fits in with the tale that St. Athanasius<sup>1</sup> as a boy on one occasion baptized other children in play, and the bishop of Alexandria declared this Baptism to be valid. Again, the actor, Genesius, being baptized on the stage in mockery of the Christians, was thrilled by the Holy Spirit, considered himself to be really baptized, and died as a martyr. The greater the element of fiction in the story, the plainer is the judgment of the Church at the time of its origination in support of such unqualified validity of ceremonies. We may add the fact that the great Pope Nicholas I<sup>2</sup> considered Baptisms valid which a Jew of his time had administered among the Bulgarians for payment, and Innocent IV<sup>3</sup> did the same for a Baptism conferred by an actual Saracen, although he had no knowledge at all what the Church was. Therefore what Bellarmine and Perrone object to as a preposterous opinion of Luther's that the Sacraments could be administered by any one, cleric or lay, man or woman, 'nay'—and here we recognize Luther's style—'by the devil himself,' is altogether in harmony with this one side of the Catholic way of regarding it. On the other hand the significance of the Catholic priestly office consists in the fact that the Sacrament is not brought about till the exercise of the definite act of will on the part of the priest; and even a deference to the *opus operatum* theory as regards the recipient

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 32.<sup>2</sup> Pope 858-67.<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 266.



was in favour of this requirement from the minister, in order that the sacred act might not be wholly deprived of the co-operation of the human spirit, and appear simply as a mechanical operation of a magical kind. It was for this reason that Alexander VIII<sup>1</sup> condemned the assertion that a Baptism was valid which the priest performed duly indeed as regards external rite, but after resolving in his heart: 'My purpose is not to do what the Church does.' The objection is that hereby the validity of all Sacraments is dependent upon the secret option of every priest, and under certain circumstances there may come to be a menacing uncertainty or a disastrous certainty. If even an ordained priest has not been baptized at all, every one of his acts as priest hereby becomes invalid. This has been set forth by Gutzkow<sup>2</sup> in the novel which, while giving a general picture of Roman magic, yet shows successful observation of the various situations and personalities that are brought into view by modern Catholicism. In his story a young priest, his ideal representative of the Catholic priesthood, the bishop and Pope of the future, has hanging over him the alarming secret that a Rabbi who came over and became a priest, and afterwards reverted in heart to Judaism, in his hostility to the faith baptized him in mockery, while meaning not really to baptize him. The information was conveyed to him upon his death-bed, and the story implies a situation, which, although not easily conceivable, it is true, in our days, yet in former time was of frequent occurrence in Spain, when learned Jews, whose only choice lay between Baptism

<sup>1</sup> Pope 1689-91.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Gutzkow, a German dramatist and author. He studied theology and philosophy at Berlin; d. 1878. The novel referred to is *The Roman Magician* (*Der Zauberer von Rom*), 1859-61.



and forcible expulsion from their native country, became priests, and even bishops, and still visited the synagogues in the dead of night.

Catholicism cannot escape from the fluctuation between two points of view. The resolution at Trent inclines certainly to the second of these (*intentio interna*), but declares itself on the side of the first (*intentio externa*). Protestantism refuses to recognize both, either a claim to esteem on the part of the purely external act, or the arbitrary power of the priest over God's blessings. Her *theology* therefore only requires of the minister the external and regular fulfilment of the rite, on which the reality of the Sacrament is based, with Scriptural conscientiousness and in accordance with his duty towards the Church, while it locates the accompanying blessing in the individual heart of the recipient. Her *Church* has not troubled herself at all about subtleties of the kind.



## CHAPTER V

### BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

#### A. Baptism.

**B**OTH Churches in their teaching as to Baptism are fairly agreed, inasmuch as a liberal, Protestant element was inherited by the Catholic Church from her past, while a Catholic one was retained by the Reformation.

In the first place, coupled with belief in Baptism as necessary to salvation, we must take account of the recognition of Baptism *by blood* and of *spiritual* Baptism. Baptism by blood attained this importance in the age of the Church's sufferings by persecution. In the days of careful preparation for Baptism and of the taste for postponement it not unfrequently happened that those still unbaptized died as martyrs. Their very sacrifice of their lives appeared a noble Sacrament, and these who testified to their faith by shedding their blood to have been baptized in that blood. As in this way it seemed justifiable to think that some substitute was possible for the actual ceremonies, the belief was extended so as to recognize that even the bare desire for Baptism, which owing to some cause could not attain its fulfilment, might be substituted for the rite, and scholastic writers laid down that besides the Baptism of water (*fluminis*), there was also that of the spirit (*flaminis*), or, as it was termed in accordance with its subjective reference,



the Baptism of desire (*voti*). In both there lies the recognition, though still unaccompanied by a consciousness of the width of its logical consequences, that the external act is not by any means the essential element, but the sentiment which is expressed by that act, and which therefore, if the opportunity is lacking for the sacred act, does not go away without its blessing; nay, if instead there be offered owing to grave historical circumstances a higher opportunity, it finds a yet higher attestation by laying hold of that opportunity in resignation to God's will. In short, we have here the silent recognition of saving faith as opposed to the purely external action, to the *opus operatum*.

The other Protestant point of view found in the heart of the Catholic Church is the recognition of *heretical Baptism*. So far as the fact that the bishop of Rome, Stephen<sup>1</sup>, in the middle of the third century actually appealed with regard to this to the customs of his predecessors, it might be said that the origin of the question belonged to the time when the Catholic Church had not yet reached a clear-cut decision. But repugnancy to Baptism on the occasion of the reception of Christians who had merely come over from another Christian community, first became a pressing matter with the bishop of Rome owing to the fact that there was an opposition Church, that of the Novatianists<sup>2</sup>, which, regarding itself as purer and more steadfast than that which termed itself Catholic, rebaptized those who passed over to it from the latter. For this action involved the assertion that the Baptism imparted by the Catholic Church was in fact no Baptism, for such persons in baptizing anew

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 111.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 158.



had never the desire to confer the rite a second time as 'Anabaptists'. It has ever been the case and may be ascribed to a natural law, that those who have without hesitation infringed the religious rights of others, as soon as their own right is infringed, feel the smart of injustice. In this way in later time the African Church, when the Donatists<sup>1</sup> rebaptized those who came over to them from the Catholic Church, rejected that rebaptism; yet at that time in opposing Stephen, St. Cyprian<sup>2</sup>, with the unanimous support of the African bishops, blamed the procedure of Rome as a strengthening of the heretics in their wickedness, as though from the unclean bath administered by these apostates children of God could be born again for the Church.

In that acceptance of heretical Baptism there lies the recognition of a Church outside the Catholic Church, and of one which like the latter administers the highest gifts of the Holy Spirit. The charter of a community which assumes itself to be infallible is subject to the law that it cannot readily part company with its past. So decisively had the Roman bishop stood up for the tradition of his Church, that the Roman Church saw itself for ever tied to this liberal view, which became universally binding, always provided that the Baptism takes place in accordance with the apostolic formula, 'in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.' Accordingly Bellarmine<sup>3</sup>, on the basis of the resolution at Trent<sup>4</sup>, recognized that in the administration of the Sacraments 'it is not necessary to desire to do that which the *Roman* Church does, but what the *true* Church does,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> *De Sac. in gen.* I. 27. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Sess. VII, can. 4.* [H.]



wherever it may be. He who has it in his mind to do what the Church of Geneva does, has it in his mind to do what the universal Church does. For his desire to do what that Church does arises from his considering her to be a member of the true universal Church, even granted that he is deceived in his perception of the true Church. And on that account those who are baptized by the people at Geneva are not rebaptized'.

This is said with reference to Sacraments in general, and it would logically follow that he who has power to introduce by Baptism into the true Church can also validly carry out the other Sacraments. Nevertheless, the bishop of Rome desired that ordinations carried out by Novatian should not be considered valid. Marriages celebrated by Protestant clergy are regarded in Rome as irregular but valid. The recognition of Protestant Ordination and Confirmation might be withheld as an encroachment upon the rights of the bishop, where it is not carried out, as it is in the Anglican Church, by bishops who hold that they have episcopal succession. In the case of any one of the other Sacraments there will scarcely ever be an important issue arising from the doubt whether the sacred act corresponding to it, as performed in an invalid manner in the heretical Church, is to be repeated in the Catholic one. But the above decision, even if limited to Baptism alone, in accordance with the conclusions as drawn by Bellarmine, which it involves for the Church, includes as a necessary, although unrecognized, pre-supposition the Protestant conception of the ideal Church, that it is not limited to the Pope's obedience, nor to episcopal succession in any other form. It is, i. e. some part of it is, wherever Christ is invoked and



the gifts of the Holy Spirit are dealt out. How much more Protestant after all is that Roman decision than the decree of the Protestant High Consistory in Berlin in 1851, which, unaffected by so noble a tradition of a thousand years, refused the Christian character to every Baptism in the free communities, without excepting those carried out in accordance with the apostolic formula, and directed that when any came over, their children should be baptized afresh; and the Prussian courts only gave that class of baptism even the honour of *recognition*, forasmuch as they punished them as unauthorized.

The narrow side of Catholicism, it is true, in contrast with her own more liberal views, discovered a loophole of escape by saying that heretical Baptism, although valid, is inadequate for salvation, albeit it is held to be adequate for baptized persons who die in infancy. The hierarchy, moreover, availed themselves of the Roman tradition to assert that the person who is baptized in any place is thereby, as a matter of right, for ever subject to the Roman Church, and that the one who has thrown off his obedience is in the position of the runaway slave who remains still the property of his master. This, however, would only be the case in slave States, and Protestants will hardly allow themselves to be persuaded that Baptism, instead of being for the children of God the charter of freedom, has impressed upon their brow an ineffaceable memorial of servitude. The assertion of the Roman Church was naturally well known to the learned among us; yet there was astonishment in German countries when Pius IX announced to the German emperor in 1873 his guardianship as his official duty, and accordingly also as his right. The



emperor in a dignified reply remarked that, as was well known, he and the majority of his subjects professed a faith which does not allow of the acceptance of a human Mediator in his relationship to God. But even in its presumption the Catholic theology recognized that the universal, the truly Catholic, Church is wider than the Roman.

Against the other large-hearted view of Rome, that Christian Baptism can be validly imparted even by a Jew or Saracen, Protestant logic would venture to press the consideration that a man cannot well impart in the way of spiritual possessions anything which he does not possess himself. Otherwise it would even have to be held a Baptism, if a monkey in his love of imitation carried out the ceremony, and a parrot took part by pronouncing the baptismal formula. But, apart from such supposititious cases as to animals, recourse might be had to that rare case which Luther mentioned in his writing upon the Babylonish Captivity, to show that, if only the Church rite is correctly administered, nothing depends upon the minister, but all upon the faith of the recipient.

If from time to time it is reported that a Protestant, on going over to the Romish Church, although baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is nevertheless rebaptized, we have hitherto ascribed this to the fanaticism of some obscure priest, who knows nothing of past history and of the law of his own Church. I gather, however, from a remark of Perrone, that this sometimes takes place under the eyes of the Pope himself, namely in the hypothetical form, the formula being in other respects the customary one. This is done in cases where there is uncertainty whether Baptism has been really received, and in fact



it is because Baptism is alleged to be so carelessly administered by Protestant clergy, that doubt with regard to its validity arises. They know, however, that, with the exception of some few Unitarians and independent communities, all Protestant bodies, and in particular the Churches of Germany, baptize with the apostolic formula, that just like the Catholic Church they deem Baptism to be not indeed unconditionally necessary to salvation, but necessary owing to Christ's command as well as to its ecclesiastical significance. It would finally be absolutely insulting to consider the Protestant clergy as a rule to be from their own standpoint less carefully attentive to their office than Catholic clerics. Accordingly this disguised rebaptism is nothing else than a defection from the ancient liberal pronouncement of the Roman Church, a scornful declaration in the face of the public, who do not understand the sophistical qualification given to the act: 'We hold that the Protestant ablution does not amount to a Christian Baptism.' If it had been administered by a Jew or Saracen this conscientious hesitation would not occur to them. If such a thing still takes place in Rome, even there it can only be in some out-of-the-way corner. I do not know of any definite instance in the case of conspicuous seceders. In Germany the thing would be no longer possible, at least in places where persons of superior education are found.

The piece of Catholicism in the heart of the Protestant Church is *Infant Baptism*, in accordance with its significance, taken over direct from the Catholic Church, as effecting *ipso facto* regeneration. Luther in the Catechism used the decisive expression: 'Baptism without faith remains a bare, ineffectual sign.' But how can this faith be said to be possible in an



infant? The Reformers one after another took up the different Catholic methods of helping out the Catholic view, that of the faith of others, whether of the god-parents, or of the whole Church, as reckoned to the immature candidate, or that of a mysterious operation of the Holy Spirit, which it is proposed to term the faith of the children themselves. It was, however, clear that then the great conception of faith on the part of the Reformers must be surrendered; this moral force, which comes into existence under the influence of the alarm of conscience, and in the capacity at once of knowledge, assent, and confidence throws itself into the arms of the Crucified Saviour. Luther long felt that here lies something out of harmony, and foreign to his principle. But in presence of the Anabaptists, these radicals both in Church and State, he could not possibly surrender a tradition which, although, it is true, not adequately confirmed by Holy Scripture, and possessed only of an individual and provincial authority in the early Church until the time of St. Augustine, yet since that time was based on the profound affections of Christian families and of the Church at large, and fraught with blessing. On the other hand, it must be candidly admitted that the Baptism of children as the Sacrament *ipso facto* of regeneration apart from faith is an *opus operatum*, and old Lutheran dogmatics, without reflecting upon the origin of this evil characteristic, even accepted the scholastic formula that children are invariably regenerated in Baptism, since they do not place the 'bar' of mortal sin in the way of the influence of the Holy Spirit.

Möhlér on this point had justice on his side in saying that the Baptism of children on the part of



Protestants is an incomprehensible act: 'If it is *only* by virtue of faith that the Sacrament acts, of what value can it be to an unconscious child?' Just for this reason Protestantism was driven to a higher conception of Infant Baptism, with reference to which Luther himself<sup>1</sup> has shown in words deeply significant that 'as long as we live, Baptism must continue and live up to the sign or sacrament of Baptism. Thus Christian life is nothing else than a daily Baptism, entered upon at a definite early date, but a daily matter as regards practice'. According to this the Baptism of children is their consecration and dedication to Christianity, which is not consummated until faith is added, not at first existent in its full Protestant consciousness, but already commencing, if the child grows up in Christian morality, and incipient Christian sentiment thrills through his young heart, for by that time the influence of the Holy Dove has come to be not a magical one, but moral and religious.

Protestantism would perhaps not have invented Infant Baptism, although in its earliest form it pointed towards it by virtue of the strong emphasis which it laid upon original sin; but, seeing that it found the rite as a matter of history in existence, it was in any case bound to guard this fair custom, which, so soon as a human being is born, in the name of the natural imperishable Church greets him forthwith as one born a Christian, and considers nothing more important than to consecrate him solemnly to the highest human destination, and so to give back the helpless child with his high title into the hands of those to whom by nature he belongs.

The difference which lies at the root of the two

<sup>1</sup> *Cat. mai.* p. 548. [H.]



Churches becomes apparent in the different attitude assumed by their missionaries with reference to Baptism. The Catholic missionary desires above all else as soon as possible to baptize as large a number as possible. Thus, to take an early instance, Xavier<sup>1</sup>, the Apostle of the East Indies, went on and on, baptizing thousands upon thousands. In this case the most important thing is considered to be to set up the external Church, trusting that Christianity will also gradually penetrate to the hearts. Protestant missionaries, going back to our Lord's words, and the custom not indeed of the apostolic, but of the early Church, are disposed to baptize only those who are sufficiently learned and approved. Moreover, the Catholic method has attained no little success. Nevertheless, in the employment of it there may happen, what has been told of the Jesuits, that on occasions they baptized unobserved Chinese without their discovering it, and the missionary Battaglia relates to the same effect that he always carried with him two small bottles, one of them containing sweet-scented water. If then a mother brought him her sick child, he first poured some of the contents of this bottle upon his head, but then while the mother was rubbing this in according to his instructions, he, without her observing, poured the baptismal water with its saving power upon the child thus gained for Baptism. So crafty a Baptism, without any sort of possible provision for Christian bringing up, and yet represented from the Catholic view as the means by which a being subjected to diabolical powers, and through them to

<sup>1</sup> Francis Xavier, a Spaniard, and one of the founders of the Jesuits, laboured in W. and S. India and in other parts of the East, including Japan. He died 1552, and was canonized in 1622.



eternal torments, is suddenly turned into a child of God, reminds us of the assertion of an old Jesuit, Stephen Menochio, that the bodies of Jews stink, but lose this odour at once on their baptism. At any rate, the latter would not be more marvellous than the former.

As regards the Baptism of *adults* the contrast between the two Churches shows itself in this, that according to the Catholic view all sins of the previous life are blotted out by means of Baptism, unless only at the moment of its administration a mortal sin opposes a bar to the Divine favour. According to the Protestant system, on the other hand, this takes place only so far as faith accepts the favour of God, and thereby a new life commences. The Catholic view can appeal to ecclesiastical antiquity, so far as the postponement of Baptism to the later years of life was recommended at that time as a prudent and consistent measure. But Julian the Apostate<sup>1</sup>, in his *Dialogues of the Dead*, was thereby able to represent the first Christian emperor as making this appeal in Hades: 'Who is there, who is a voluptuary or a murderer? Let every criminal come confidently hither! By washing him with this water, I will forthwith make him clean.'

In the Catholic Church there have been gradually attached to Baptism some usages which are suggestive and innocent, although the moistening of the nose and ears of a candidate with spittle, especially in the case of adults, does not produce an impression which is precisely aesthetic. The cure of the blind man by our

<sup>1</sup> Flavius Claudius Julianus had been brought up a Christian, but on succeeding his brother-in-law Constantius as emperor in 361, announced his conversion to paganism. He was killed in an expedition against the Persians in 363.



Lord<sup>1</sup> was something of quite a different character. The Reformation, in returning to what is of certain Biblical authority, has surrendered these symbolic embellishments. The most dubious of these ceremonies, however, viz. exorcism, was retained in the Lutheran Church, as it fell in with Luther's fancy and that of his people, and for a length of time was maintained by them with passionate regard as against the Reformed Church. In the Catholic Church of early days exorcism arose on the occasion of the Baptism of adults, by way of repudiating the Olympian gods and every idolatrous existence. When the gods came to be considered equivalent to devils, and every newly born person to be possessed by demons in virtue of original sin, it practically came to be a driving out of the devil, yet so that the symbolism of the proceeding retained its significance even in the darkest time of Lutheran orthodoxy. The local revival of this system takes up the exorcism with still firmer grasp. In no case does this part of the rite, although it has something of a superstitious flavour, form a point of contention with the Catholic Church.

### B. Confirmation.

Among the symbolic usages which accompanied Baptism in early times was also the imposition of hands and anointing, the former according to apostolic precedent<sup>2</sup> for the conferring of the Holy Spirit, the latter the Chrism, as a symbol of becoming a Christian; both demonstrable as used from the time of the second century.<sup>3</sup> In consonance with the Roman custom merely to lay the hand upon heretics coming over to

<sup>1</sup> Mark viii. 23; John ix. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 17, xix. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Tert. *de Bapt.* c. 7. [H.]



the Catholic Church, and in consideration of the fact that it was Apostles who thereby imparted the Holy Spirit, Confirmation by the laying on of hands began from the middle of the third century to be considered in the Western Church as an act possessing a sanctity of its own, and gradually to be restricted to the bishops.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, as the bishop could not be present at every Baptism, the two acts came also to be widely separated in point of time. As a principle, however, this did not come about till the thirteenth century.

The Eastern Church accepted the distinction of these as two Sacraments, but, as maintaining the right of the presbyter to administer both, she left them without separation in point of time. To the Roman baptismal rite, however, there remained attached as it were the shell out of which the new Sacrament was hatched, for there belongs to this day without a break in their Baptism a twofold anointing, the one with olive oil, the other immediately following it, which is the special chrism. Now the operation of Baptism was considered to be in the main the forgiveness of sins, but at the same time union with Christ and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This last accompaniment, after Confirmation had been separated, appeared to the scholastic writers doubtful, and even a general Council<sup>2</sup> considered it to be only a probability, but on the other hand to the Fathers at Trent<sup>3</sup> it became a certainty. Thus nothing peculiar remained for Confirmation, except the strengthening and increasing of these spiritual gifts, yet not as though necessary to salvation.

Catholic theology deals in this connexion with various disputed details within its own communion,

<sup>1</sup> Cypr. *Ep.* 72. [H.]    <sup>2</sup> At Vienne, 1311-12. [H.]    <sup>3</sup> *Sessio XIV.* c. 2. [H.]



whether the laying on of hands alone, or the anointing alone, or one or other indifferently, or both together are the essentials for the Sacrament? with what matter the anointing is to be effected? who has to consecrate the unguent? and the like, as this becomes a seriously debated question, where the master of the ceremonies plays a weighty part in matters relating to salvation. According to the Roman catechism and the corresponding practice Confirmation is not as a rule administered before the seventh year, but, according to the Roman liturgy, even children in the arms of their god-parents can receive it. The practice of laying on of hands by the Apostles was for the imparting of miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit. They were also, however, imparted by another means before Baptism.<sup>1</sup> In other cases the laying on of hands was irrespective of the miraculous gifts, which scarcely presented themselves as a healthy phenomenon of Christianity at any subsequent period. The earliest evidence of anointing after Baptism is in the case of a Gnostic sect. So little did there exist a settled tradition with regard to the institution of this Sacrament, that a scholastic writer of reputation assumed that its establishment took place at a mediaeval Council, and for its institution directly by Christ Perrone has only this evidence that the Council of Trent bears witness to it.

Protestantism, in view of the hesitation felt towards this as a supernumerary Sacrament, at first surrendered the sacred act itself. Further, they were influenced by the desire not to snatch at the privilege belonging to the bishops, so long as there was a hope of a reconciliation with them; while to the Protestant mind

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 44 ff.



Confirmation had already changed its aspect for the youth arriving at mature years, and had come to be a solemn confession of their faith and reception of the spiritual blessing of the Church. Thus as a matter of fact since the seventeenth century it was again looked upon as the independent confirmation of the baptismal vow, and in this way the vindication and completion of Baptism, which after all it has been in the Catholic Church as well ever since the universal establishment of Infant Baptism. If, however, the Protestant view of Confirmation was condemned<sup>1</sup> at Trent even before it was realized, this was caused by the Roman Church's shrinking from free testing and free declaratory acts. It is not, however, the Protestant intention and custom to instruct candidates for Confirmation in doctrines opposed to Christianity, but in Biblical Christianity and its reasonable basis. Shrinking from timidity indeed is quite conceivable, but to do so after approaching the altar would be the cause of much scandal, and would be a rarer thing than even an 'I will not' at the altar of wedlock.

The fact that Catholic Confirmation is administered exclusively by the bishop, and the very rarity of the festival especially in the large German and French dioceses, has a tendency to heighten the solemnity of the impression, if the ministers of the neighbouring congregations bring those who belong to them to the appointed chief town, which then keeps a high Church festival. This further has the advantage of exhibiting the bishop. But the great disparity of age among the candidates, who vary not unfrequently from seven years to man's estate, of itself prevents preparatory instruction in common from being thought of; a thing

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio VII, Confirm. can. I, Bapt. can. 14.* [H.]



moreover which according to the Catholic view of this Sacrament is not essential. In the Protestant Church it is as a rule preceded by six months' instruction in the Catechism by a parish clergyman. It is always administered at the particular period at which childhood merges into youth, immediately before the time for learning a definite civil occupation or social duties; that time to which St. Augustine's mother desired to postpone his Baptism, inasmuch as then in presence of the temptations of youth he had special need of a guardian angel within through the evoking of a great spiritual exaltation. The whole family and all their friends have in most cases long before prepared themselves for this day, on which a blessing is to be conferred upon their child in common with all of like age in that community. If among Protestant peoples a ruling thought prevails in the midst of an absolute freedom of conscience, namely, a fairly definite consciousness of the tenets of their faith, and a burning indignation directed against any attempt to lead them in a Catholic direction, this is based principally upon our act of Confirmation; which therefore, without being a Sacrament, and in opposition to all *opus operatum*, owing to its purely moral and religious effect has attained a much more deeply planted significance in the Protestant than it has ever done in the Catholic Church, which is satisfied with regarding it merely as a momentary exaltation.



## CHAPTER VI

### THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

AS in accordance with Catholic teaching Baptism washes away all the sins that precede it, the grace of Baptism, on the other hand, is again lost through every mortal sin which follows it, so that in order to enter afresh into connexion with God there is need of another Sacrament, *Penance*, which is contrived for all believers in common with a view to fatherly instruction, correction, and comfort. Its constituent elements are, according to the divine institution, *Repentance*, *Confession* with the judicial pronouncement of the priest, and *Satisfaction*, or, instead of this last, an *Indulgence*.

Protestantism, after at an earlier date recognizing Confession as a Sacrament, gave it up as such, first because it lacks symbolical matter, still more from opposition to priestly authority. It therefore conceives it as essentially something internal, a transaction between the soul and God alone; its constituent elements being *repentance* and saving *faith* without excluding its natural consequence, good works, or the wholesome furtherance of it by the Church in the shape of confession and absolution. Therefore in opposition to the Catholic tenet, which ascribes an indelible character (*character indelebilis*) to Baptism, and nevertheless allows that its essential purport is defeated by means of every grievous sin, Protestantism sees in it also the forgiveness of all future sins, or,



as Möhler expresses it, a letter of indulgence bearing God's seal and covering the whole life, so that on the occasion of every sin there is merely need of having recourse to Baptism for its forgiveness.<sup>1</sup> But this is not intended to be a bare recalling to mind of an event, of which, in any case for us who have been baptized as children, there is not much to remember. Rather it has to do with Luther's conception of the spiritual Baptism to be carried out day by day,<sup>2</sup> only combining the one perishable Sacrament with the other which abides as a permanency; Baptism being thus considered as dedication to Christ and comprehension in Him. Faith having recourse to this, acting in Christian earnestness and possessed of moral power, constantly receives from the mercy of God the forgiveness of sins.

### A. Repentance.

The first condition for the forgiveness of sins is *repentance*, that is to say, grief for past sins, alarm at their consequences, and longing for a victory over them. With regard to these fundamental conditions both Churches are at one. Möhler brings an objection to the reformed conception that it takes account only of terror at the thought of hell, a conception above which an uncultivated nature has not the power to rise. He says that in the case of the Reformers this 'involves a noteworthy indication of narrowness of thought, and of lack of acquaintance with the educative power of Christianity', while he points out that, on the other hand, according to the Catholic conception repentance is 'a deep abhorrence of sin itself, arising from awakened love to God, with a conscious matured

<sup>1</sup> *Cat. mai.* p. 349. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 171.



resolution to sin no more'. Later Protestantism will readily agree with *this* Catholic conception, as well as with what Möhler adds, viz. that it is at variance with the most obvious facts of history to represent the road consisting of trepidation in the presence of the God of punishment as absolutely the only one which leads to the Church; and that he who from a longing after the truth embraces the Son of God as He has appeared to man, is at once in a higher position than he who is brought to Him merely through fear of hell. It was only the light-hearted treatment of sins in the decaying condition of the papal Church which kindled the flame of the Reformation in regard to this precise point, and which with energetic singleness of aim set up afresh the Cross of the Saviour hard by the abyss of sin and misery. But Christianity, as distinct from all other popular religions, has for its deep intrinsic value in point of morality that, although developing every germ of good that it finds in men, it yet primarily discloses itself as a deliverance from sins, and goes through the world preaching the original and the everlasting gospel of repentance. If in the Lutheran confessional documents repentance is based upon the terrors of conscience in the presence of the anger of God, yet it is to be considered that the second, and internal constituent of repentance, less emphasized by Catholic theology, is saving faith with all its religious power in the realm of morals. This cannot refrain from casting its gentle light into the gloom of those terrors, so that, inasmuch as the life has in unison what formal dogmatics separate merely in idea, there arises, according to the Apostle's words, that godly sorrow, which of itself leads to salvation.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 10.



But Möhler had altogether forgotten that in the scholastic teaching of his own Church a long conflict had been carried on as to whether even that repentance which arises from the fear of hell, and not from love already awakened towards God, be not sufficient. He had forgotten that the Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> was content with the lesser sort of repentance, that the Roman Catechism<sup>2</sup> holds that even a moderate sorrow for sins is sufficient, if only what is defective in it be supplied by means of confession, in order to open the kingdom of heaven by the keys of the Church, and that when Jansenism<sup>3</sup> desired to admit the validity only of the higher form based upon the love of God, Alexander VII declared the other view as equally justifiable and as the more usual. This is in keeping with the view of the Roman Catechism, which makes the decisive point to consist not in the disposition of the penitent, but in the absolution of the priest, as effecting the forgiveness of sins. Against this *opus operatum* some scholastic teachers who took a higher view, as afterwards the Jansenists, sought a remedy in the definition of repentance, which Möhler also adopted. The reformed confession could treat with indifference this conflict of the schools, as relying upon the second constituent act of its gospel of repentance.

### B. Confession.

The second constituent act of Catholic penance is confession, and in fact *auricular confession in the divinely appointed way*. It consists in the first place of confession (in the presence of a priest authorized to receive it) of all mortal sins not already confessed with the circumstances qualifying their moral guilt, as neces-

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XIV, de Paenit.* c. 4. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> II. 5. 37. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 149.



sary for salvation, and of all venial sins as beneficial, so far as the person confessing is aware of them after careful self-examination. It consists, in the second place, of the judicial decision on the part of the priest, in accordance with his office relating to the power of the keys, in respect to these sins, with an absolute observance of secrecy in reference to them. Confession is to be made at least once in the year : nevertheless, such persons as hardly had much to acknowledge confessed much oftener, even daily. The necessity of enumerating all known mortal sins, although still concealed, has for its rationale the fact that a righteous judge with regard to these gloomy depths of a soul, can, strictly speaking, only be the One who knows all hearts. The idea is that through auricular confession He, so far as possible, becomes this. The decision as to this necessity must accordingly go back to the judicial authority of the priest. Its authorization was found in the words of the departing Saviour : ' Receive ye the Holy Ghost : whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them ; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.'<sup>1</sup> This is confirmed and at the same time explained by the assurance given to St. Peter, and afterwards to the Apostles collectively : ' What things soever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven : and what things soever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'<sup>2</sup>

The evasion of the force of these words, which consists in saying that the power was granted only to the Apostles, is as precarious as the assertion is presumptuous that it only holds good for particular successors of the Apostles. It was by means of the Apostles, bestowed upon the Church as a whole, which for all

<sup>1</sup> John xx. 22 f.

<sup>2</sup> See Matt. xvi. 19, xviii. 18.



time has the office of carrying on the conflict against sin in humanity even to death, while at the same time she is the reconciling power for the purpose of forgiveness. This office she fulfils by means of those to whom she has entrusted a definite share of her rights and duties, that they may have the advantage of being independent in their exercise of them.

But those weighty words of our Lord are capable of two constructions. They may be understood as though to the effect that it was left to the option of the Apostles to forgive or to retain sins, and that everything which they establish upon earth is also recognized in heaven; or to the effect that they merely establish in the Church upon earth that which holds good in heaven and which answers to the principles of eternal justice, and that accordingly they are to forgive or retain sins on the understanding that what is not in harmony with those principles or with the Holy Spirit is of itself null and void. This is the *evangelical*, the former is the *hierarchical* interpretation, according to which priests in the confessional sit as judges, whose sentence takes precedence of the sentence of heaven, and who accordingly stand above angels and archangels, to whom no such power has been committed.

If we follow the lofty moral tone inherent in Christianity, which excludes all human arbitrariness, there can be no underlying doubt which meaning corresponds to the thought of our Lord. Moreover, He had Himself proclaimed the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins in quite a universal application: 'Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand',<sup>1</sup> and in the same way the risen Lord recognized His Divine mission to cause that 'repentance and remission of sins should be

<sup>1</sup> Matt. iv. 17.



preached in His name unto all the nations'.<sup>1</sup> His prayer does not attach the pardon of our guilt to any sort of priestly interposition, but places man by himself over against God the Father, merely adding, as was natural, the moral condition that we do to others what we expect from the Father in heaven<sup>2</sup>. He neither heard confessions, nor caused them to be heard, but even those who in the main sought only bodily healing from Him He bid: 'Go hence; thy sins are forgiven thee!'<sup>3</sup> So, too, the Apostles did not try heart and reins as judges of the conscience. They declared Baptism for the forgiveness of sins, and in one day baptized three thousand<sup>4</sup>. Just before partaking of the sacred meal, as a preliminary to which the subsequent custom of both the Western Churches specially appointed confession to take place, the Apostle only exhorts that each should try himself. He is thinking of spiritual men, how each Christian ought to be such as to judge all things, and to be himself judged of no man<sup>5</sup>, and only in the case of a notorious transgression does he demand, in accordance with Jewish custom, that the community itself should expel a man causing a scandal<sup>6</sup>. The Roman Catechism, it is true, has for the opposite interpretation an absurd piece of evidence, based upon an allegorical exposition of St. Augustine, viz. because our Lord, when Lazarus came out of the tomb, still bound in graveclothes, said to the Apostles, 'Loose him,'<sup>7</sup> He imparted to them the power to bind and to loose judicially.

The Holy Spirit in the Church still strove long

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 47 f.

<sup>3</sup> See Matt. ix. 2, &c.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. v. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 12; Luke xi. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Acts ii. 41.

<sup>7</sup> John xi. 44.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 15.



against the hierarchical interpretation, to which, however, she was bound to come in the end by means of the general development of the hierarchy, aided by the *penitential discipline* of the first centuries, which, even though rightly distinguished by Catholic theology from the sacrament of penance, yet exercised over it a decisive influence. As long as the Church in the face of the whole power of the pagan State felt itself to be like a holy household united to God by close family ties, it was natural for it, as well as being to the interest of its good name, to exclude from its body all who became guilty of gross transgressions, and those as well who in times of persecution saved their miserable lives by the denial of Christ and so were *ipso facto* excluded. This exclusion was simply a right belonging to the community. But as being an exclusion from a circle of persons who had been taken out of the sinful world and lived in the full favour of God, it pressed heavily on the conscience, and those who had thus fallen submitted themselves to severe penances in order to obtain readmission. The imposition of these penances in the form of abstinence from meat, wine, baths, and from all social intercourse, this removal into what was virtually a vale of tears, full of vehement protestations, not unfrequently for years, or even to the hour of death, and in the same way the final readmission into the community, was a judicial act natural in itself as well as in accordance with the precedent set by the Apostle in his demand for the excommunication of the incestuous person and in his exhortation to deal gently with the penitent<sup>1</sup>. This judicial act, however, was carried out by the bishop with the consent of the community, or by the provincial synod in the case of

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. v. 1-5 ; 2 Cor. ii. 4-8.



persons voluntarily submitting themselves, and lamenting their fault. The intention was not that the priest as God's plenipotentiary should forgive the sin, but that by warning and infliction of punishment the sinner should be moved to return to God. In that sense this penance received the name of the second plank of deliverance in the shipwreck. Thus it was an isolated ecclesiastical act, adopted after a grievous transgression, while its possible repetition was even as a rule forbidden, whereas in the later Sacrament of Penance it is treated as a regularly recurring sacred act.

When now that primitive penitential discipline which dealt judicially not with secret but with public sins, or at least with those which were publicly acknowledged through the pangs of conscience, began to yield before the changed conditions belonging to a great popular Church, the Church teacher of the West, eminent for Biblical learning<sup>1</sup>, raised his protest against the hierarchical interpretation of the plenary authorization of the priest<sup>2</sup>, which with the aim of glorifying the priesthood as its ideal was considered to be equivalent to a perpetuation of the voice of the God-Man. He maintained that in the sight of God the matter of importance was not the pronouncement of the priest but the life of the penitent, as in the Old Covenant the priest did not make the leprous man clean or unclean, but merely examined whether he was clean or unclean.<sup>3</sup> Later we find Peter Lombard testifying to the variety of opinions as permissible, while he himself, with an appeal to St. Jerome, under-

<sup>1</sup> Peter Lombard, an Italian theologian, shortly before his death (1160) made bishop of Paris. He was termed 'Master of the Sentences', from the title of his great work dealing with dogma and duty.

<sup>2</sup> *Sent.* IV, *dist.* 18, E, F. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> See Lev. xiii.



stands the forgiveness of sins by the priest in an evangelical sense as only *indicative*, while God reserves for Himself alone to forgive sins, and does not always follow the decision of the Church. St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>1</sup> justifies with some hesitation the hierarchical action based on a belief in an *effectual* forgiveness of sins, and the traditional intercessory formula 'May the Almighty bestow upon you absolution!' or 'May Almighty God have compassion upon you!' comes to be exchanged for the hierarchical judicial sentence, 'I absolve thee!' although, as could not be denied, cases of unfair refusal of absolution or of unjust pronouncing of excommunication, which undeniably occurred, were at all times the occasion of limitations and protests even among the faithful. Accordingly a Church tradition of a thousand years in no way supports the necessary assignment of a judicial office to the priest for the forgiveness of sins, an office to which auricular confession would be needful, in order to render it even possible.

Appeal is made to the account that many who had become believers through St. Paul's agency confessed what they had done hitherto. The story relates to a religious alarm, which, through the spiritual power of St. Paul, had come upon the multitude at Ephesus with regard to the sorcery practised there<sup>2</sup>; an isolated occurrence in which, as in the case of the Baptism of St. John, there is merely afforded an instance how particular sins were publicly acknowledged under the independent pressure caused by spiritual shock. Further, appeal is made to the exhortation of St. James: 'Confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be

<sup>1</sup> *Summa*, III. qu. 84, art. 3. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Acts xix. 17.



healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.'<sup>1</sup> What would the Roman Church give that it had said, *Confess to the priest!*

To the penitential discipline of the primitive Catholic Church there appertained a public acknowledgement of sin, and specially of that particular sin on account of which expulsion had been inflicted, in order to be so much as admitted among the penitents. This was the commencement of the penance, the whole course of which is from time to time described as an acknowledgement of guilt. Side by side with this, and owing to the pressure of a burdened conscience, individual confessions were made at once in presence of the community. This was the case with those women of whom Irenaeus<sup>2</sup> tells that, after being corrupted in body and soul by intercourse with Gnostics, on their return to the Catholic Church they in some cases openly acknowledged their disgrace, while others of them, though prevented by shame from adopting this course, nevertheless did not all of them fall away from the faith. Such confessions form the transition to the later Sacrament of Penance. We find Origen advising with quaint outspokenness: 'As those who have partaken of indigestible food are relieved by vomiting, so too let him who, acting as his own accuser, would acknowledge his sin spue it out and so remove the cause of the sickness.' Inasmuch as this acknowledgement appeared too severe to make in presence of the multitude as though in a theatre, after the middle of the third century there was appointed in many bishoprics a specially approved presbyter, that these confessions might be referred to him; and in the next century we find it to be a widespread custom that those

<sup>1</sup> James v. 16.

<sup>2</sup> I. 13. 7. [H.]



who were weighed down with a special burden of sin made confession of their sin to this priest before partaking of the Holy Communion. Accordingly it happened (in 390) that a lady of high rank in Constantinople had confessed certain definite transgressions on account of which she was condemned to perform penitential exercises, and having been, as it appears, abused in the Church itself by a deacon, made a fresh confession of this. When, in consequence, utterance was given to many bitter speeches against the clergy, the Patriarch, Nectarius, excommunicated the guilty deacon and suppressed the office of the confessing priest, so that each individual should be again at liberty to come at discretion to the Holy Communion. Most bishops of the East followed suit. This is the account given by the Greek ecclesiastical historians, one of them a closely connected contemporary,<sup>1</sup> of an occurrence obscure in itself, for here there is no question of a breach of the seal of confession, such as often came to the front in later times; but at all events we may infer from it that the bishops of the orthodox Church did not regard the confession of individual sins as a Divine ordinance, but as an ecclesiastical regulation which might again be altered. Moreover, there is as yet no recognition of the absolute duty of keeping such confessions secret. The biographer of St. Ambrose<sup>2</sup> boasts of him as an exceptional thing, that he disclosed to none but to the Lord Himself the transgressions which were confessed to him.

The universal requirement of auricular confession was capable of enforcement only if the absolute duty of secrecy was established at the same time, so that no human consideration, not even that of averting

<sup>1</sup> Socrat. *Hist. Eccl.* V. 19. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Paulinus. [H.]



misfortune or crime, should induce the priest to disclose what had been confided to him as the representative of Christ. Leo the Great<sup>1</sup> approaches this when he declares: 'Every confession is sufficient which is first of all made to God and then also to the priest, who intervenes as intercessor for the faults of the penitents. For the majority can only be moved to do penance, if the sin recognized by the conscience of the penitent is not published to the ears of the multitude.'<sup>2</sup> This supposes, on the one hand, that the acknowledgement of definite sins is still a voluntary matter, only *recommended* by the Church, and, on the other hand, that the priest receives it not judicially, but as an intercessor with God. This corresponds too to the ancient ritual of the Roman Church, as Sozomen<sup>2</sup> pictures it. During the celebration of the Holy Communion the penitents lie sobbing and weeping in the porch. Then comes the bishop, and throws himself down in like manner upon the ground weeping and confessing. He, however, is the first to rise, raises up those who are lying there, and utters an intercession on their behalf. The Council of Chalons (813) took up the same position in its declaration: 'Some say that we must confess our sins to God alone, but others are of opinion that they are to confess to the priests. Both of these acts are of great benefit. And according to the direction of the Apostles we must confess our sins one for another, and pray one for another, that we may attain salvation. Thus the confession, which has to do with God, cleanses from sins, but that which has to do with the priest teaches

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* 168. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Hermias Sozomenus, an ecclesiastical historian who died about the middle of the fifth century. The reference is to his *Hist. Eccl.* VII. 16.



us how to cleanse ourselves from sins.' Hugo of St. Victor<sup>1</sup> is earnest in withstanding those who said: 'Furnish us with an authority. Where does the Scripture direct us to confess our sins?' and from time to time in the Canon law of the mediaeval Church the necessity of this confession of sins is advocated and opposed.

On the basis of a custom which had been formed in this direction, and which owing to the moral depravity of Christendom held even sins of thought to be in need of confession, Innocent III<sup>2</sup> was the first to direct that all believers of either sex, who had come to years of discretion, should at least once yearly confess *all their sins* to their own priest, and reverently receive the Holy Communion at Easter. Where the Church has not been closed to them in life, a Christian burial is promised at death. In practice this was soon modified, so that confessions which people were unwilling to make to their own minister, were confided to a wandering mendicant friar, whom they expected never to see again. The Council of Trent<sup>3</sup> maintained that auricular confession was ordained by Christ; nevertheless the necessity of confession as a matter imposed by Divine justice was limited to mortal sins. Moreover, the longing desire for this Sacrament, where its performance is impossible, is reckoned as an equivalent. Therefore in the hour of death, when no priest is at hand, confession may be made to a layman.

The Reformers, rejecting auricular confession as a torturing of the conscience, considered the power of the keys as bestowed upon the whole Church, to be administered for the sake of order by the clergy,

<sup>1</sup> A French mystical theologian; d. 1141.

<sup>2</sup> *Conc. Lateran.* IV, can. 21, V. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Sessio XIV, de Paenit.* c. 5. [H.]



not judicially, but as an office of grace. Therefore absolution is to be pronounced over all who desire to give in their adhesion to the faith which in its nature is efficacious to salvation. If therefore belief is to be accorded to it as to a voice from heaven, this holds good only as regards its certainty on God's side. The opinion of Lutheran orthodoxy that the minister does not barely indicate the forgiveness of sins, but also effects it, was merely a change of this objective truth into the subjective appropriation of it, a change favoured by a slightly hierarchical tendency. Again the refusal of absolution and excommunication was constituted a social right of discipline against a notorious, scandalous, unrepentant course of life. Human error is here admissible. It is only the man who in his own heart breaks away from Christ that excludes himself from the ideal Church. The Lutheran Church desired to retain private confession as a pious custom, which on any occasion, when the soul feels the need of it, can be applied to the acknowledgement of particular sins; on the other hand, when reduced to a bare formula, it is lost to the later Protestantism, and any attempts at reintroducing it with a sidelong glance towards auricular confession have found little favour. But both Protestant Churches exercise the right of declaring publicly forgiveness of sins, leaving the retaining of them to the One God. The Lutheran Church does this in connexion with a definite act of confession on the part of those partaking of the Holy Communion. Both Churches also concede to the special needs of a troubled conscience the acknowledgement of individual sins in presence of the congregation or of the priest, his compliance with these moral conditions, and the rightful claim of



inviolable secrecy: for the power is not entrusted to the individual man, but to Christ and the Church, and the possibility of such confidence without fear of betrayal may prove the moral salvation of a soul. The minister may in this way be brought into a difficult position, if through the obligation of silence he feels himself, it may be, prevented from saving an innocent person or defending his own innocence. Frederick the Great<sup>1</sup>, who protected the Jesuits when the Pope abandoned them, caused a priest to be hanged without more ado owing to a suspicion that in confession he had favoured the desertion of a soldier.

The Catholic allegation that according to Divine justice every sin, or at any rate every mortal sin, is only forgiven if it be confessed to a Roman priest, or if there is at least present a desire to do so, is demolished by its own history. Such a limitation is utterly foreign to Holy Scripture, foreign too to the consciousness of the Catholic Church for over a thousand years, which without a break prays in its liturgical forms for the forgiveness of sins, and declares the same without this condition. Moreover, what a picture it presents to us of God, that He should have tied up His grace to a thing so accidental and external, which is perfectly suitable for one person, who is frivolous and shameless, but unsuitable to another of more refined and serious temperament, to whom it is a kind of half renewal of the sins. If the judicial forgiving and retaining of sins cannot be accomplished without this auricular confession, the natural inference is that it is not to be accomplished in this way, and that it was not so intended by Christ. While the earthly judge is obliged to inquire minutely into the case in

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 226.



order to give a just decision, and the doctor to probe the wound in order to heal it, the matter is different with spiritual wounds; and the relation of the repentant sinner to God is no setting up of a judicial claim, in the attempt to maintain which we should be for ever lost, but pure grace through Christ. Auricular confession is to be regarded merely as a Church ordinance, which in its time arose historically and naturally.

As such it has been a powerful means of discipline for dull consciences, and has often been attractive in its guidance for tender souls which needed this absolute self-surrender as a substitute for other love. Certainly in very many cases some grave sin has not been committed, because the temptation was checked by the thought of the future acknowledgement on the part of the poor sinner before the minister. Very much more mischief has been set right again as far as possible as the result of the enforcement of confession. In particular, stolen goods have been replaced, although, it is true, only by thieves on a small scale. The great ones are not used to going to confession, with the exception perhaps of Italian banditti, who are for the most part very ecclesiastically minded! Moreover, this influence of the Church has its shady side.

The decision at Trent limited the necessity of confession to mortal sin, and it is only on this point that there lies an obvious appeal to the tradition of the early Catholic Church with reference to its penitential discipline. Few lay folk know what is a *mortal* sin, and what not, since even theologians are not too certain about it. Accordingly Möhler uses the very indefinite conception of *grievous* sin as an equivalent. The Church Fathers, already attached to the use of obscure images derived from Biblical sources, as a rule



understood in the main under mortal sin the sin which continues to the end without repentance. The mediaeval Church in its tendency to externalism enumerated individual acts of sin and sinful passions as mortal sins. Trent persisted in naming alongside of unbelief definite classes of sins, and in enlarging with a vague *etcetera* the list of mortal sins, in the case of which belief was not lost. As against this external belief in the Church, Protestant theology, going back again to the general and inward conception, considered mortal sin to be simply a total breach with saving faith. Since then the faithful Catholic will hardly deem envy, anger, dejection, vanity, covetousness, daintiness in food, drunkenness, even though they be mere tendencies or are exhibited on a moderate scale, to be mortal sins, there remains for the conscientious penitent nothing but to confess everything regarded as sinful. Moreover, since the worst in most cases has to do with our thoughts, so far as opportunity, mood, often even a serious desire, are lacking for converting them into acts, the confessions of moderately good men, living for the most part in steady-going, prosperous circumstances, consist to a large extent in sins of thought. Children in their searchings of conscience preparatory to confession have written their little sins upon scraps of paper, in order not to forget them. One occasionally has copied from another, and in their puzzled searchings for more they have been heard to say with what sounded like a cry of joy, 'I have found another one!' Sometimes people with very slight moral training, while intending religiously to count up definite transgressions, really become perplexed as to what are properly sins requiring confession. The story goes that one man each time before confession



beat his wife, to make her remind him of all his misdeeds! In such cases then the Pharisaic conceit of special virtuousness of life may easily arise, or at any rate this superficial self-valuation of a man according to his individual sins and good works. But if the penitent carefully goes in accordance with his sins of thought, it readily happens that thoughts which have passed in a fugitive, dreamy way through a soul comparatively pure are for the first time, owing to the deliberation whether they are to be considered as sins, fixed and put into words, and thus obtain a seductive shape and become powerful temptations. Or a bashful disposition, 'a heart half childish, half divine,' which hesitates and knows nothing more of any importance to confess, has questions proposed to it in confession, which are heard with blushes, and for the first time convey the possibility of such sins, and at the same time the seducing thoughts which belong to them. Or uneducated men, whose confessions are glibly made, while the small acts of penance laid upon them are also soon disposed of, consider the important point in the matter to be that which the usage to which they are accustomed presents to them as such, trust to the words of pardon spoken by the priest, and, after an easy settlement of this sort, address themselves with light heart to a fresh course of sin.

The priest himself, especially in the pressure of the confessions required by rule at Eastertide, can hardly have the mental collectedness for a trustworthy investigation of the moral condition of every one who is confessing, while the latter, according to his temper and disposition, gloomy or light, will not unfrequently give an indistinct picture of his inner self to the priest, even apart from intentional silence or



concealment, owing to the readiness with which a man deceives himself. The decision of the priest does not, it is true, possess the validity of an infallible judgement of God, yet it is to be absolutely believed and attended to by the penitent. How can this be done in a Christian way, when we are compelled to recognize that very unjust excommunications have been issued, of which even in the fifth century there had been such experience that St. Augustine<sup>1</sup> gave as his opinion: 'If a believer is unjustly excommunicated, this brings much more harm to him that does the injustice than to him that suffers it.' On the other hand Clement XI, in the Bull *Unigenitus*, in 1713, condemns the opinion that 'the fear of an unjust excommunication ought not to hinder us from doing our duty.' The fact that excommunication, as experience shows, is now seldom pronounced, especially against those of high position, and still more seldom with the desired results, betokens not merely greater mildness on the part of the papal jurisdiction, but the lessening power of faith in a Church as the sole way of salvation. The excommunication of a whole country, i.e. an Interdict, fell as a rule upon a people for refusing disloyally to desert their prince, who had had a breach with the Pope on some political ground or other. If even the mediaeval Popes were obliged to notice that by the prohibition of all Divine worship souls as a rule became still more obstinate, and some Popes on that account strengthened their spiritual curse with the demand for the overthrow and spoliation of all foreign allies of such a nationality, still the exhibition of this force on the part of the Pope, as well as the belief in it, has by this time lost the power

<sup>1</sup> *De Bapt. c. Donat.* I. 17. [H.]



of being enforced, and 'the Interdict has ceased to be a living constituent part of ecclesiastical discipline'.

In the *Maria Regina* of the Countess Hahn-Hahn<sup>1</sup> two young and kindly countesses shed tears 'of angelic compassion' over Protestants as the poor bereaved ones who have never received 'remission of sins' nor 'the blessed certainty of reconciliation with God'. As if the word of the priest, who is liable to be deceived like another man, nay, who is at times obliged to refuse absolution for some reason or other of Church politics, were more certain than the word of Christ, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee,' spoken through the mouth of the Church and its appropriation based upon the personal, faithful surrender to God's mercy. But that Catholic sympathy seems to be quite ignorant—although we may perhaps excuse this ignorance in women and countesses—of the fact that the Catholic Church to a much greater extent deprives its followers of the full certainty of the grace of God and everlasting happiness, except the few who are vouchsafed a special revelation upon the point. This uncertainty with regard to the highest interests of the faithful, in contradiction with the plain certainty which otherwise Catholicism everywhere guarantees, is perhaps looked upon with favour as regards discipline, in order that the believer may not consider himself independent of the remedies and powers of the Church, and it is founded upon the doctrine that salvation is to be earned by works and penances, wherein however, strictly speaking, it always remains uncertain, whether they are adequate. By this means a torturing doubt would be excited in the breast of every seriously thinking man, were it

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i p. 187.



not that the natural power of evangelical Christianity, which exists even in the Roman Church, put this dogma of doubt in the background. In the Protestant Church as well this anxiety as to whether future salvation is secured is not unknown to earnest-minded Christians, and was especially justifiable from the standpoint of Calvinistic predestination: but in this case it is the Church which exhorts men to conquer such doubt, since salvation is not dependent upon our works and worthiness, but upon the grace of God in Christ, which attests itself in our heart. On the other hand, the Roman Church as a rule only allows the believer a conjectural belief in his salvation.

But grant that the effects of auricular confession that are favourable and dangerous to morality balance one another, and even that the former under certain conditions of culture preponderate. That is not the main point of the matter, but the domination of the clergy over people's minds. The deepest secret of man is sin. He who holds in his hand the key to this secret, still more the most private weaknesses of his whole neighbourhood, before whom consciences lie bare as before God Himself, possesses in virtue of this an unbounded power to rule men, even as a king can rule them. In point of fact auricular confession was, if not introduced, yet tenaciously retained, not for the sake of sins and the souls' health of the faithful, but for the sake of the priests. The true import of this sort of confession is subjection to the priest. Hence the charitable decision that mortal sin is forgiven even at the bare wish for confession, or the forgotten sin at the same time with that which is confessed, because in that case too there takes place the submission of the soul before the priest as the



representative of God. Never did a hierarchy discover a greater means of obtaining dominion than when the greatest Pope of the Middle Ages<sup>1</sup> took hold of that which had for the most part been fashioned harmlessly as a part of moral training, and said: 'Ye must at least once in the year confess all your sins to a priest on pain of losing your eternal and temporal happiness.' Consider what it means to compel as a matter of morality men, whole nations, to disclose their most private actions and thoughts. The Church thereby came into possession of almost all family and State secrets, for seldom is there any in which sin has not borne its share. The very secrets of the nuptial couch were disclosed in the confessional, and the woman was more dependent upon her father confessor than upon her husband. This method of rule was no doubt distributed among many, and its nature excludes concentrated action. A betrayal of confessional secrets to ecclesiastical authorities, although it was from time to time brought up as a charge against the Jesuits, yet in the face of the stern threats of punishment on the part of the Church can have taken place but seldom, and only in extraordinary cases. But this large number of persons, men without families, without home, without country, are ruled by *one* will and by *one* interest. All of them, e.g., are directed in the case of a mixed marriage to give the Catholic partner no rest in the confessional, until the Catholic bringing up of all the children is accomplished. That now for so many years Peter's pennies flow to Rome, a more abundant sum than payments for indulgences produced in former days, for the satisfaction of all the needs of the Vatican, is explained simply by auricular

<sup>1</sup> See p. 192.



confession. The full knowledge of sins is almost more powerful still than the refusal to absolve them, although this too is occasionally employed for ends which have not directly to do with sin. In Portugal the confessional fought on the side of Dom Miguel<sup>1</sup>; in Italy against the national kingdom. In Spain absolution was refused to the purchasers of Church property who were not desirous of giving up again what they had bought in good faith. In the conflict in Prussia on the subject of the Hermesian philosophy,<sup>2</sup> the archbishop of Cologne issued private directions to the confessors in Bonn; immediately all the lecture rooms of the obnoxious Catholic professors stood empty. The honest Tirolese were threatened with the retention of their sins, if they did not oppose the law, which sought to render tardy justice to Protestants. To hear confessions is no light business. The ears of a priest must be much soiled by all these dismal avowals; moreover, he must on every occasion hear much that is tiresome and trivial: but deeper knowledge of men at less expense can scarcely be acquired by any means except in the chair of confession, and the skill of many priests, who otherwise have had but a narrow culture, must accordingly in large measure be ascribed to this.

It was a great renunciation on the part of the Reformers that feeling at once the incompatibility of auricular confession with Protestant principles they rejected it, although the ground which they adduced, viz. that the enumeration of all sins is impossible,<sup>3</sup> does not precisely hold good, for Catholic doctrine

<sup>1</sup> Maria Evaristo Dom Miguel, son of John VI of Portugal, usurped the kingdom 1828-34, when he was deposed; d. 1866.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> *Conf. Aug.* I. II. [H.]



only demands the avowal of all the sins which one remembers on careful self-examination. The papal theologians at Augsburg gave as a response: 'Complete confession is not merely necessary for salvation, but also is the motive power of Christian discipline, and of all obedience.' Under the latest Bourbons a watch-word of the Jesuit missionaries who roamed about as fathers of the faith was the saying: 'Confession or hell: no middle course!' The Romish hierarchy will never voluntarily forgo this sharp sword of spiritual authority. But the thing which is wresting that sword from its hand is the growing consciousness of personal freedom, which, joined with the perception that God has not appointed this condition for His grace, sets itself against the idea, in the absence of special confidence and necessity, of disclosing to a stranger the conflicts and sorrows which are revealed to Him alone who knoweth the hearts. Women, in keeping with their nature, submit themselves to this ready surrendering even of their innermost self in cases where this form of it has been familiar to them from childhood, and is willingly carried out as a moral act; but it will be a moderate estimate if we assert that in Catholic Germany, in France, and in Italy out of the educated and half-educated circles at least half the men go to confession in silence, if not with a smile. Only under circumstances of political bondage does the hierarchy still exercise the right after Eastertide to require confession tickets, which at that time used to be also on sale here and there; but, in the face of the great multitude of those who do not confess, it cannot think of doing more than threatening with some sort of ecclesiastical punishment. Where it has the power, the Roman Church certainly deems it still



permanently a matter of conscience to urge confessions at least by gentle methods. In January, 1860, an order went out from the cardinal vicar to all who let lodgings in Rome to take care, if any one was ill in their house, that not later than the third day of his illness he should confess, under the penalty of a severe fine, of which one part went to charitable institutions, and the other part to the informer. As in this case the sick were subjected to compulsory confession, so in the last years of the yet inviolate States of the Church it was certain political suspects who had to confess each month, and to attest this to the police in a certificate furnished by an approved father confessor.

Möhler attempted to demonstrate a moral necessity for auricular confession. Everything really existent within must, he argued, have an outward expression. Man does not believe in the internal unless he sees it in some external shape, and he who hates sin inwardly confesses it also outwardly with 'glad pain'. As though the outward presentation had to be simply and solely the avowal before a priest; as if the sorrow which remains in the heart would not be felt to be real; and as though the outward presentation should not be above all the penitent's ceasing to do evil, and so leading a nobler life. But Möhler himself found a resource. He said that the Canon of the great Lateran Council is merely to be placed in the list of disciplinary ordinances, since the appointment of a time when any one has to confess does not belong to the essence of the Sacrament. Moreover, the present excellent custom of confessing before Communion does not rest upon a fundamental law of the Church. Therefore 'he who knows himself to be guilty of no more serious transgression, might well be permitted *of his own*



*accord* to approach the Table of the Lord without having made a confession to *the priest*, and so again it might certainly happen that, as in former time, every person should only then confess when he felt his conscience specially oppressed'.<sup>1</sup> But this is the Protestant point of view, to which without intending it the Roman Catechism<sup>2</sup> also conforms, when in a happy hour it promises grace to the upright repentant heart without anything further. But then it is all over with auricular confession, for it is no law, no condition of the forgiveness of sins, no necessity: only the person oppressed in conscience can take it up voluntarily as a good deed, so that he may find for his troubled heart from his parish clergyman counsel and the intercession of the Church. But out of the good deed of taking counsel for the conscience with an experienced man in whom one can confide, according as individual circumstances have brought about the need of this, there has come to exist in the Roman Church a compulsion and a snare which oppresses the conscience, chokes the moral sensibilities, and denies Christian liberty.

### C. Acts of Satisfaction.

These in like manner have their root in the public penitential discipline of the early Catholic Church, which made this guarantee for repentance to consist in stern acts of severe self-denial, in order like every human punishment to enforce the inviolable character of the law, and at the same time in a judicial sense as regards religion to be a *satisfaction* for the Divine justice. The word satisfaction was introduced by Tertullian<sup>3</sup> from the Roman judicial phraseology, and thus was referred to these human acts of satisfaction

<sup>1</sup> *Symbolik*, p. 286. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> II. 5, 34. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *De leun.* c. 3. [H.]



even before it was applied to the great Sacrifice upon the Cross. The pious policy of these penances, voluntarily undertaken or at any rate voluntarily intensified, was that the less the man spared himself, the more will God spare him. The terrible severity of penitential acts in the early Catholic Church had to be moderated when it became the great Church of the people. In the Sacrament of penance they were almost completely confined to a number of prayers, fasts, and almsgivings. The idea always was that they should be as much a moral preservative for the future as a just retribution for the past. In this way they were at once *curative* and *punitive*, '*medicamenta*' as well as '*satisfactiones*', and to be imposed judiciously with regard to both objects, and not as a bare meting out of punishment, viewed as isolated and apart from modifying considerations. The father confessor was as much judge as physician. The element of satisfaction in these cases is considered as so external a matter that the Church indeed at times, remembering its origin, objected to it, but as a rule held that a person need not hesitate to cause penances imposed to be carried out by others. The Venerable Bede<sup>1</sup>, who represents ecclesiastical culture at the beginning of the eighth century, offered this advice: 'Let him who cannot chant the prescribed Psalms choose him a suitable person who shall do it in his stead and at his cost.'<sup>2</sup> King Eadgar's<sup>3</sup> Order for Penances contains under the heading 'Of persons of distinction' instructions how a fast imposed for six years may be accomplished in six days through a

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated English monk and ecclesiastical historian; d. at Jarrow, 735.

<sup>2</sup> *Paenitent.* X. 8. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> King of England, 958-75.



sufficient number of assistants after the fashion of the German oath-assistants. Quite lately we heard of two ladies who, in great contrition for their sins, resolved to make their servants fast for them. Pleasanter advice is that, if the priest imposes a severe fast upon a penitent, he should himself share the fast for at least one or two weeks, so that the saying may not be applicable to him: 'Woe unto you lawyers also! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.'<sup>1</sup> This joint fasting has not become customary, but scholastic teaching as well as in later times the Roman Catechism,<sup>2</sup> resigning itself to the prevalent immorality, approved of the transference to another with payment of the penances imposed (under the pretext of cultivating a gracious Christian fellowship), and thus of an undeniable *opus operatum*. So in China a man who is rich enough can purchase a substitute for criminal, even for capital punishments. The Council of Trent did not express any adverse opinion, but as it laid stress upon the morally corrective aspect of satisfaction and its acceptance as dependent upon Christ, condemned the innovators who, deeming a new life to be the best form of penance, disallowed all gain from acts of satisfaction.<sup>3</sup>

Protestantism, while admitting the historical significance of these acts in the ancient penitential discipline, set them aside as human decisions which obscure the satisfaction to be obtained solely through Christ and salvation as solely through faith. Moreover, it was noticed that in Holy Scripture the palsied man, the prodigal son, the malefactor,<sup>4</sup> were forgiven their sins

<sup>1</sup> Luke xi. 46.

<sup>2</sup> II. 5. 72. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Sessio XIV. Paenit.* c. 8. [H.]

<sup>4</sup> Matt. ix. 2; Luke xv. 20, xxiii. 43.



and promised salvation. We read nothing of their acts of satisfaction, and even of St. Peter only that he wept<sup>1</sup>.

When the meditations of Catholic theology addressed themselves to the defence of acts of satisfaction as not merely a corrective discipline, this was effected by means of the distinction between guilt and punishment. The guilt, they said, is blotted out by God's omnipotence in virtue of the priest's absolution: the punishment God owing to His justice cannot altogether remit, but changes eternal into temporal punishment, and as the latter is often not observable in the earthly existence, it takes place beyond that existence, i. e. in Purgatory. Acts of satisfaction voluntarily undertaken come in as substitutes for these future yet temporal punishments. Thus they form a prudential measure so as to get off at less cost. The attempt to point out in the Scripture a Divine command in this sense is made in vain. At first the words, 'Bring forth fruit worthy of repentance,'<sup>2</sup> sound like it. But this exhortation of the Baptist refers to the change of mind which attests itself in moral actions, in contrast with a vain reliance upon descent from Abraham. The distinction drawn between guilt and punishment is warranted. In civil life it often happens that guilt remains at least without visible punishment, just as after pardon has taken place certain forms of punishment still continue. But if the guilt is really blotted out, they are no longer felt to be punishments, but merely the consequences of the sins which, according to the Divinely appointed course of nature, or, it may be, merely in social life, attach themselves to sin, and change their very nature in the case of the man who is truly reconciled to God. Death is from the Church's point of view the punish-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 75.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iii. 8.



ment of sins, the fatal capital sentence to be carried out on the sinner. For the Christian it is a going home, for the martyr a triumphal progress.

The mystery how man, who has fallen away from God through sin, nevertheless can at the same time be reconciled to God has been solved for the Church by the mediation of the God-Man. As this permits the Divine righteousness to do the greater thing, viz. to pardon the guilt, so that even in the conscience of the sinner it remains only in the shape of a sweetly melancholy or actually joyful perception of God's grace; so in each case it also permits the lesser thing, the remission of punishment, which accordingly, where it takes place at all, is no longer the necessary atonement for the broken law, and so for the righteousness of God, but can merely serve partly for a moral preservative, partly as a deterrent to others. This latter takes place only to the slightest extent, for the punishment is not inflicted before mortal eyes, but is transferred to the next world. Accordingly there remains absolutely nothing of the nature of satisfaction, but merely its moral effect upon the penitent. Moreover, Catholic use does not, in imposing penances, consider an accurate judicial apportionment, as the idea of satisfaction would require, but above all considers the needs of the individual and those of the community for the time being. The imposition of these penances may have some significance in the way of a certain educative power over the multitude, and from usage, without prejudice to the terms of evangelical Protestantism. On the other hand, grief for sin, with the serious resolution to improve, and saving faith make, it is true, severe demands upon the soul, yet can be misunderstood by persons of thoughtless disposition.



as though by virtue of a hasty resolution and assurance they would be rid of their sins. But also the Catholic method of dealing with the matter only increases the risk, which already lies in the enumeration of sins, that these trifling acts of penance, if they are done easily and readily, take the place of a rooted improvement of heart and life, so that the confessional is only a periodical shaking off of the burden of sin, in order to return to the sinful habits between times. How inadequate morally then are these ordinary acts of penance which are so highly commended!

To give money in *alms*, and so as far as possible to alleviate the necessary inequality in the distribution of God's external gifts, is a religious duty upon which Mohammedanism lays still greater weight. This act of penance is exceptionally easy of accomplishment to the rich man, who, however, shall with exceptional difficulty enter the kingdom of heaven<sup>1</sup>; although even the poorest man has from time to time the opportunity of bestowing abundant alms by gratuitous, perhaps even unnoticed service, and the penny of the poor widow<sup>2</sup> stands at a high value. While it is thus a very limited duty in proportion to each man's ability and other circumstances, it can bring much disaster if practised without restraint and sagacity. Even that mendicant Order of Assisi<sup>3</sup>, so heroic and charming in its commencement, which inspired nations with so great a desire to give alms, has had an unwholesome influence upon the Romance nations, in particular upon the noble Italian nation, in that by virtue of this sanctified mendicancy which carries on begging as a service rendered to God, that occupation has lost its disgrace for the man who can work. Moreover, it

<sup>1</sup> Mark x. 23.<sup>2</sup> Mark xii. 42.<sup>3</sup> See p. 43.



was not our Lord who said: 'Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?'<sup>1</sup> Accordingly to impose almsgiving as a penance is indeed a direction to do something that is good, and which also benefits others, wherever it is judiciously exercised; but so far as more is involved in it than simple duty demands, so far as it proffers to the righteousness of God satisfaction for earlier transgressions and exercises a deep moral influence upon the giver, it is not capable of being perceived. A cold, unmerciful man, and also a tender-hearted bankrupt, are equally capable of giving abundant alms.

*Fasting* may agree with many natures both in body and soul. A man of sound physique is bound, where necessity presents itself, to endure without much ado even serious fasting, hunger, and thirst, so far as a man can so endure, and it was quite natural that Alexander should in the presence of the army pour out into the hot sand the helmet full of water which could only have quenched *his own* thirst. But in the peaceful conditions of life which are the lot of those who are wont to live on the whole moderately, an importance is given by voluntary fasting to the interests of the stomach, and thoughts are occasioned which direct themselves by preference to the sensual side of life, instead of raising the soul above it. Moreover, what is in the main intended, viz. the weakening of desires of another kind, where strict fasting does not absolutely mortify the body (which is not the intention of the confessional), this object is as far as possible from being attained by the change of diet, considering that the desire for feasting is intensified after abstinence. The ordinary Catholic fasts are not indeed of much

<sup>1</sup> John xii. 5.



importance for the well-to-do, since a sublime art has been developed in the cloisters, and spread over the Catholic world in order, by means of farinaceous food and fish, even including the otter, to obliterate the memory of the warm-blooded animal kingdom. On the other hand, millions of our fellow men are in any case for the most part relegated to scanty Lenten-tide provisions. No one will deem that their fasting is in itself a serving of God. The Lord says: 'When they fast, I will not hear their cry.'<sup>1</sup> Christ did not prohibit the custom of fasting, common as it was among His own people and almost throughout the East, but among His followers they were to disguise the fact by wearing a joyful countenance<sup>2</sup>. As the antiquated form of devotion He did not favour it among the Apostles, but regarded it merely as a temporary sign of mourning in the future; and as the friends of the bridegroom do not mourn, so long as the bridegroom is with them<sup>3</sup>, so He desires ever to be in the midst of Christendom as the risen and glorified Lord. Accordingly fasting can only hold good within Christendom as an absolutely voluntary method of obtaining spiritual advantage, and modified by individual taste.

*Prayer* is no doubt the vital breath of religion, but in the shape in which it is usually imposed in confession, a prescribed number of *Paternosters* and *Ave Marias*, it reminds us rather of that babbling, to do away with which our Lord taught His disciples the Lord's Prayer as the model of a Christian prayer<sup>4</sup>. Prayer is fitted to be the refreshment of our heart, and the highest form of comfort in time of need. The repetition of

<sup>1</sup> Jer. xiv. 12.<sup>2</sup> Matt. vi. 16 ff.<sup>3</sup> Matt. ix. 14 ff.<sup>4</sup> Matt. vi. 7 ff.



prescribed prayers to order as a penance, as a punishment, to take the gentlest view, can only be compared to the case of the child who is forced by way of punishment to learn for a definite number of hours longer than usual, while the adult thanks God for the leisure that is given him to learn, and to go steadily on learning. Winckelmann<sup>1</sup>, of whose lofty soul with its enthusiasm for beauty the Romish Church certainly made an evil conquest, although his birthday was solemnly kept each year at the Capitol, wrote from Rome to a friend: 'I have also confessed, lovely things of all sorts, which lend themselves better to Latin than to the mother tongue. I am to pray seven *Paternosters* and seven *Aves*. Unfortunately I cannot pray the *Aves*, and have no use for the *Paternosters*. Should I not soon make you desire to become a Catholic?' He only expressed in clear-cut and bitter language what thousands feel who have emancipated themselves from the confessional, and what an ever larger number of thousands will feel, not without the risk that thus estranged from their Church they further intend to be able to dispense with a *Paternoster* in the celebration of public worship or in the stillness of the closet.

#### D. Indulgences.

A further Catholic transformation of penance is brought about by the Indulgence. In its general signification, as its name of Latin origin indicates, it means some sort of remission, whether of sin or of punishment. In all cases where there is a punishing authority there must, owing to the imperfection of human justice and its occasional conflict with what is

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 92.



fair, be also a power of absolute or partial pardon. In the penitential discipline of the early Catholic Church this power was exercised with rigorous conscientiousness through congregations, bishops, and provincial synods. The discipline was relaxed through good nature, and perhaps even taken off through vanity by martyrs, since they celebrated the Holy Communion with excommunicated persons, thereby receiving them back—a course of action which is recorded to have been rejected in the African Church.<sup>1</sup>

The *indulgence*, in the special sense of the word, had in the course of its development evolved two sides. It was partly an ecclesiastical privilege, in the place of a penance imposed or an imminent punishment to appoint a lighter work, and one which perhaps was more agreeable to the Church, such as a pilgrimage, crusade, monastic life. Partly it was a substitution by means of pious gifts bestowed on some kind of praiseworthy charity or ecclesiastical undertaking. The second sort is ordinarily intended, if there is a contention as to the justice of an indulgence. It is found first on the occasion of a heresy of but slight repute, Manichaeism<sup>2</sup>, where the perfected members, who had taken upon themselves the stern duties of this dualistic faith and therefore were quite incapable of maintaining themselves, were supported by the catechumens, to whom accordingly they by means of their intercessions accorded indulgences that they might take part in the business and pleasures of earthly life. Then the Old Testament idea, current through all the East, to buy off sins by means of alms, i. e. to obtain from God

<sup>1</sup> Tert. *de Pudicit.* c. 22. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> A rigidly ascetic system which obtained a foothold in Persia and neighbouring countries and in North Africa. It was founded by Mani (Manes, Manichaeus); b. *circ.* 215.



forgiveness of sins by beneficence towards the poor, is most attractively recommended in Salvianus's book<sup>1</sup> (written before 440), directed perhaps, but only ironically, against the greed of those who hesitate to make gifts and testamentary dispositions, whether for the poor or for churches and ecclesiastical institutions, and thus to pay this very easy quit-money for their sins. This was the permanent idea in the founding of monasteries by lay persons, as a remedy for sin, as a discharge for their souls, and indeed in most cases for the whole kindred of the founder, for the souls of his ancestors, children, relatives, and servants.

But the innocent origin of the more definite sort of indulgence as the current price for the punishment of definite sins, and its naturalization in Germany, lies in the popular copying of the fine imposed for homicide (*compositio*). It becomes a mulct, bearing proportion to the injury done, and paid to God by being given into the hands of the poor or of the Church. Contributions to the Crusades, on the part of those who were unable to share in them, brought money specially into the hands of the Popes who stood at the head of this warlike movement of Christian peoples towards the East.

Bishops also proclaimed indulgences, perhaps even for the dedication of a church. The great *portiuncula* indulgence of the Franciscans had quite a popular origin simply in the legend, but as that legend refers to a presumed bestowal by the Pope, he was considered as justified in issuing of his own accord indulgences recognized far and wide. The observance of the Roman jubilee year from the fourteenth century

<sup>1</sup> He was a Christian writer, who seems to have been a priest in Marseilles. The reference is to his treatise *Against Avarice*.



onwards gave occasion to send indulgences for sale across the Alps, for the benefit of such as could not obtain them in Rome. In Germany and in the northern kingdoms they found a faithful people, ready to buy.

Theology felt at heart much scruple with regard to the traffic in sins, which was commencing. Abelard<sup>1</sup>, when he was advised to permit the issue of an indulgence for the building of the church of the Paraclete, replied: 'Such a custom, productive of scandal to the people and disgrace to us, we desire not to introduce, inasmuch as we should be issuing an indulgence which none can give but God alone.' The Franciscan Berthold<sup>2</sup> said in a sermon in the thirteenth century: 'Fie! thou penny-seeking preacher; how many souls dost thou with thy false gains cast into lowest hell, thou slayer of righteous repentance! The devil, one of his most faithful servants, who goes about among simple-minded folk, says that he has authority from the Pope to take away all thy sins for a farthing. Do you give them nothing; then they must give up their deceit.' St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>3</sup> remarks that the view taken of the indulgence is manifold. 'For some say that such an indulgence is not worth so much as it is valued at, but only so much to each as his faith and devotion have a right to demand; but that the Church permits it to be preached in order that by means of a certain *pious fraud* it may entice men to do good, like a mother who promises her child an apple in order to induce it to walk. Others say that the extent of forgiveness is not to be measured only according to the piety of the recipient nor according to the amount of

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Berthold of Ratisbon, a German preacher and missionary in Austria and elsewhere; d. 1272.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 230.



that which is offered, but in regard to the thing for which the indulgence is bestowed. But even in this way the credit of the Church tradition is not saved, for she appoints sometimes a greater, sometimes a smaller indulgence for the same thing.' <sup>1</sup> Plainly the theology of the Church desired only to excuse something which it found as an existing fact in the Church, and the greatest churchman among the scholastic writers comforted himself in this way, viz. that it would be conceded by all that the indulgence must at any rate be worth something, seeing that it would be impious to say that the Church does anything in vain. Moreover, he proceeds to disclose a slight moral value, through the inclination which he who receives the indulgence begins to feel towards that for which the indulgence is given. He says that the heart is opened to the working of grace, and that thus the indulgence is not given to the destruction of souls, except if it be given irregularly. Yet even for this case St. Thomas heartens himself to give the assurance that then the person who bestows the indulgence does indeed sin, but none the less the recipient receives the full benefit. His Biblical support was found in the unrestricted power to forgive sins. As though our Lord had said, 'I give you power to sell indulgences for the living and the dead.' What has been termed the rational basis for the custom is merely the dangerous presumption founded upon the existence of the fact, while it is added that the Church would be acting unkindly, if her remission of endurable punishment in this life did not also involve a mitigation of punishment beyond the grave.

Among theologians who are less fettered there is

<sup>1</sup> *In Suppl.* qu. 25, art. 2. [H.]



constantly cropping up the recognition of an indulgence as being merely the remission of the punishment imposed by *the Church*. But inasmuch as the deeds of penance imposed in confession are as a rule mild and are performed by the faithful themselves, or seen to by others at their expense, there would scarcely be any object left for the indulgence. Accordingly to justify it there came into existence the view that it is rather the punishments in *Purgatory* that it delivers from, and thus that it holds good not merely before the judgement seat of the Church, but before that of God. Catholic theology has never made it plain to us, nor apparently to itself, in what way and to what extent these punishments after death accrue to the faithful and exact satisfaction for something further, remaining perhaps since the last confession still unexpiated upon the deathbed, even though absolution has been given in confession, and the satisfaction therein imposed rendered.

This indulgence held good for the living in regard to their future beyond this life. But Sixtus IV<sup>1</sup> in 1477 promised an indulgence for the souls which already found themselves in *Purgatory*. Belief in it was of the highest significance for this business, for hitherto the purchase of an indulgence was only the interest of a pious selfishness. Now it became a matter of piety towards relatives. The citizen and the peasant surrendered the penny saved up for time of need in order to snatch a departed one whom they loved from long torture in flame. According to Tetzel's<sup>2</sup> brief instructions for priests in their preaching of indulgences, they are to say: 'Hear ye not the voices of your late parents, brothers, sisters, children, as they cry?

<sup>1</sup> See p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 44.



Ye are leaving them in the flames, and yet ye might buy indulgences.' On the other hand, the consideration arose whether death does not loose all human bonds, and so whether the Pope really has power over the dead. A declaration was recalled which Gelasius<sup>1</sup> (in 495) had made at a Council at Rome: 'They demand that we should also bestow forgiveness of sins upon the dead. Plainly this is impossible for us, for it is said: "What things soever ye shall bind *on earth*."'<sup>2</sup> Those who are no longer upon earth, He has reserved for *His own* judgement, not that of man; and the Church does not venture to assume anything to itself, of which it knows that it was not permitted to the holy Apostles themselves.' In face of every sort of expression of displeasure Sixtus declared that his indulgence benefits the dead only in the way of helpful intercession, like the prayers and pious alms of the faithful, but that its efficiency consists in its being the intercession of the earthly Father of believers, on whom are bestowed plenipotentary powers out of the treasure of the universal Church to come to the rescue of the souls in Purgatory. But while in German countries there was still a contention upon the question of whether the Pope has power over Purgatory so that, if he desired, he could make it absolutely empty, Alexander VI and his immediate successors offered for sale plenary indulgences for the souls in Purgatory.

The scholastic writer, Alexander of Hales<sup>3</sup>, had already disclosed that treasure of the Church, while in accordance with the current conceptions as to the absence of merit in good works, their externality, and

<sup>1</sup> Gelasius I, bp. of Rome, 492-6.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 18.

<sup>3</sup> A noted English theologian and philosopher, b. at Hales, Glouc., d. 1245.



their capability of being transferred he laid down the doctrine that the superfluous merits of the Virgin Mother and of all the saints added to the main store of the infinite merits of Christ, formed an inexhaustible treasure belonging to the Church, entrusted to St. Peter as holder of the keys and to his successors, in order out of this to bestow upon repentant sinners what was needful for a complete or partial remission of temporal punishments. Clement VI<sup>1</sup> proclaimed this treasure of the Church as a dogma. It was later also entered to the credit of souls already in Purgatory, and has never since been exhausted.

It logically follows that by a business connexion with this treasure there is provided not only a buying off of merited punishment, but also a blotting out of sin through participation in the merits of others, and, since all the faithful who at their decease are in at least passable connexion with the Church, have only Purgatory to dread, an entrance by purchase into heaven. It is true that, according to the authority given by the Pope to the preachers of indulgences, sorrow for sin is pre-supposed as a condition of the indulgence, but the purchase of the indulgence was itself regarded as constituting a pledge of repentance. That indulgences were sold for future sins previously planned is perhaps only a fictitious statement with regard to Tetzel in view of an act in consequence of which the money box itself was taken from him. He might, however, have appealed to a high authority for the remission of a future sin. Dante in hell hears Boniface VIII<sup>2</sup>, prince of the modern Pharisees, inviting Guido Montefeltro to do wrong: 'Fear not in thine heart! I absolve thee by anticipation. Thou knowest that I open and

<sup>1</sup> Pope, 1342-52.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 77.



shut heaven.’<sup>1</sup> The other complies: ‘Inasmuch as thou dost thus wash me clean from the sin into which I am to fall, &c.’ Especially where it was for the furtherance of the Pope’s views in Church politics, remission of punishment and of sin was promised without more ado to all who took up the Cross or the sword in the cause of the Roman Church, according to the precedent set by Gregory VII.<sup>2</sup> He, in spite of his moral strictness in other matters, announced that ‘In order that Rudolf may govern and maintain the German Empire, I grant to all who loyally attach themselves to him, in your names, O Peter and Paul, forgiveness of all sins and your blessing in this and the future life’. Therefore it is not opposed to Roman tradition, although somewhat incorrectly expressed, that in 1860 there was found upon prisoners captured in the Pope’s army a paper to the following effect: ‘A hundred years’ plenary absolution to him who takes up arms against the excommunicated king.’<sup>3</sup>

With the offer of jubilee indulgences there arises also a complaint on the part of the Popes that unauthorized persons on their own account sold indulgences under scandalous conditions. It concerned, however, the interests of the appointed preachers of indulgences, who were expected to bring in large sums of money, to make the moral conditions as easy and the value of the indulgence as high as possible, as a remission of punishment and sin. In this Tetzl was merely a mouth with a gift of popular eloquence for carrying on such humbug. No doubt the plea was then as it is now: ‘The money is not the *payment for*, but merely the *condition of*, the indulgence.’ With

<sup>1</sup> *Inferno*, xxvii. 99 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> Victor Emanuel II.



about equal justification might one say: 'I have obtained a pig, not for money, but on the condition of paying thirty shillings for it.' The Roman Church appeared as one of those 'houses of merchandise' which our Lord banished from the Temple. It was a perversion of all moral ideas, termed long before Luther by earnest-minded people of the time a murdering of souls; and if there were not to be found in Christendom an indestructible moral foundation, this genuine 'treasure of the Church', men would, instead of troubling themselves with good works, have preferred to rob and murder in order to obtain riches, and, if with a portion of these they had bought an indulgence, would have taken care to retain for themselves a sufficient supply.

These audacious indulgences towards the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century collected alms, first for the war with the Turks, and then for the building of St. Peter's. It is true that it was reported in Germany that Leo X<sup>1</sup> promised a share of this indulgence to his sister Magdalene as marriage dowry, and Italian historians confirm this. But in any case that building demanded huge amounts; yet it has an ominous appearance that the most august monument of Roman Catholicism, which in mighty ruins at some future time will bear witness to that faith, or will serve the purposes of some alien cult after the manner of the Pantheon now, gave the first occasion for the event which severed almost half the nations from the Catholic Church, and still stands menacing the future of this Church.

Luther in his theses is still minded as follows: 'Let him who gainsays the truth of the Pope's indulgence

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 271.



be accursed. But blessed be he who concerns himself to withstand the wanton and audacious words of the preacher of indulgences. They preach human devices. They give their word for it that as soon as the penny thrown into the chest jingles, from that hour the soul leaves Purgatory.' His thought was only to bring back the indulgence to its original innocent signification. 'The Pope has neither the will nor the power to remit any other pain except those which he has imposed in consonance with the Canons. Every Christian, provided that he feels true repentance and sorrow for his sins, has full acquittal of pain and guilt, and that acquittal is due to him without an indulgence paper. Christians ought to be instructed that the Pope's disposition and intention is not that remission by means of an indulgence should be placed on the level of any sort of work of mercy. Christians should be instructed that the Pope, if he knew the extortion of the preachers of indulgences, would prefer that the cathedral of St. Peter's should be burnt to ashes than that it should be erected with the skin, flesh, and bones of his little flock. Those who presume by means of letters of indulgence to be certain of their salvation, will go with their master to the devil. The rightful, real treasure of the Church is the holy Gospel.'

It was human folly and passion which nevertheless fulfilled a God-appointed destiny in the fact that these controversial utterances, which truly involve the Reformation in their import, while retaining a genuine belief in the Catholic orthodoxy were answered only by the writings of papal flatterers charging them with heresy, and in the end by excommunications. Then indeed by the action of his opponents brought to a full



understanding of himself, Luther in the Articles of Smalcald indignantly disburdened the fullness of his heart, while on the occasion offered by the mass, in speaking of the mystery of idolatry which it begets, he also mentions indulgences: 'Thus benefit may be bestowed upon both the living and the dead, for payment, and some sorry Judas or Pope to this end sells the merits of Christ together with the superfluous merits of the saints; all of which is not to be tolerated, and is not only devoid of support from God's Word, but is contrary to the first Article of our faith: for Christ's merits are not obtained by our works or coppers, but by grace through faith, not from the authority of the Pope, but by the preaching and Word of God.'

The German nation at the Diet of Nuremberg in 1523 in their 'hundred expostulations' virtually adopted Luther's charges that the saving remedies provided by the Roman Church were only to be had for money, that for money even the adultery of the laity and the concubinage of the clergy was permitted. The Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> based indulgences, without any kind of definition as to their nature, upon Christ's authority to forgive sins and upon primitive tradition, declared them to be very beneficial to Christian people, and pronounced a curse upon their opponents, admitting, however, that abuses had crept in, and desiring their removal, and resolving in general to do away with evil gains in this connexion.

Since that time indulgences have been no longer offered for sale. The Reformation in this matter exercised its purifying power even upon the Roman Church, and pious Popes asserted that the enormities of the indulgences' traffic, as they had been committed

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XXV, de Indulgentiis.* [H.]



in Germany, were unknown, and certainly not intended, at Rome. Yet it remains a bad sign that so unchristian a thing was possible within a Church and in its name. What still in Protestant controversy is termed a sale of indulgences is a moderate government charge for the dispatching of indulgences earned in some other way for the benefit of those who desire them. Accordingly indulgences remain in traditional use only for definite ecclesiastical actions; in particular, as a privilege and festal adornment for definite altars, churches, cemeteries, and festival seasons. Thus certain altars at Rome, in spots which have weight as being consecrated by the blood of Apostles and martyrs, have obtained this privilege, that he who says a mass at them, or causes one to be said with this intention, thereby frees a soul from Purgatory. Some churches guarantee for every visit made to them or on their high festivals an indulgence for a long, specified series of years. Thus indulgences for hundreds and thousands of years, which are in this way earned with slight trouble at Rome, relate only to Purgatory; and yet these figures, imposing in themselves, become insignificant in comparison with the *plenary* indulgence, which others of these churches have to offer. It may appear unfair that it is made so easy for those who live in Rome, or who are fortunate enough to get there, to obtain at least a supererogatory indulgence; but the Roman theologian comforts us with the assurance that scarcely any one is found so bereft of all means as not to be able to procure an indulgence. But even inside the circle of Catholic dogma a reasonable account or a justification would in vain be sought for this multitude of indulgences plenary, or for as much as a hundred years. They are attestations of



regard obtained by request from individual Popes and bestowed upon individual favourite spots. The monkish Orders especially have procured for themselves such privileged indulgences in the most motley variety, and by the addition carried on since the fifteenth century of all which other Orders have obtained by their pious works and from the favour of Popes, such an enticing abundance of indulgences has arisen that all Christian salvation seems a thing simply external and easily imparted.

The pre-requisite, at least of post-Reformation Catholicism, for the effectual attainment of such indulgences is, it may be granted, consistently sincere repentance and confession. Nevertheless the work done in its barely external aspect, along with the confusion between punishment and sin, always came temptingly into the foreground. For example, in the church of San Lorenzo without the Walls at Rome an inscription proclaims forgiveness of *all sins* to those who visit this ancient and outlying Basilica. The church of St. Pudenziana lies in the ancient Suburra. It has been modernized, but stands upon the site of ancient baths, and is adorned with their pillars. It boasts of an altar upon which St. Peter is related to have said mass in the house of his host, the senator Pudens<sup>1</sup>. There an inscription makes this promise: 'He who visits this church obtains each day an indulgence of three thousand years, the remission of a third part of his sins, and very many other indulgences besides.' It is a firmly established, learned presumption that in the case of such promises, customary in the mediaeval Church, we are to understand by the word 'sin' the punishment due to the sin.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 21.



But rather they belong to the ancient lack of consideration which referred the indulgence at once to guilt and punishment. Moreover, in such cases there is always lacking the internal condition, and thus it remains undeniable that the Church, under the very eyes of the Pope, in a solemn monumental announcement promises a more or less plenary absolution for a bare entering of the consecrated place. Even as late as 1875, in the proclamation of the Jubilee indulgence, those who within fifteen days visited specified leading churches in Rome in order there to pray for the prosperity and advancement of the Catholic Church and Apostolic see, and for the extirpation of heretics, received, subject to presumptions of the possession of pious churchmanship, remission of all sins. This indulgence was also transferable to souls in Purgatory by means of intercession.

During Holy Week the cardinal chief penitentiary sits at fixed afternoon hours in the various leading churches on a kind of throne-chair, with a long, metal-tipped rod, like a fishing-rod without line. People varying in nationality, age, and sex kneel before him, generally five or six at a time. He taps each on the head with the end of the wand; then they stand up, and immediately others take their place. He does this, so far as I have observed (down to 1870), with a most unmoved countenance, and without accompanying it by so much as a word. One supposed, if not otherwise informed, that it is such persons as already have made their confessions elsewhere, especially in serious cases reserved for the Pope, that are here receiving absolution. But a priest whom I once questioned, while viewing the proceeding, answered, 'No, they need not have confessed'; and he added,



as though in excuse: 'It is not done for grave but merely for slight sins.' A very learned diplomatist living there, with whom I got into talk about it, assured me that it was merely a recognition of the authority of the Church to punish, adding: 'I have even from time to time taken part in it.' With this vagueness as to a matter so striking and annually recurrent, what can the generality of people suppose but that by means of the wand of the great Prince of the Church they are without more ado rid of their sins?

If the indulgence had reference only to ecclesiastical punishments, assuming that it is administered wisely and conscientiously, there would be no fault to find with it in those circles which allow ecclesiastical punishments in general. Only then it would have no significance for the Sacrament of penance as it has been practised for centuries. That significance consists wholly in the menacing expectancy of Purgatory, and the justification of an indulgence of the above sort consists in the doctrine of the treasure of the Church.

According to the dogma of Purgatory each soul, departed in the Catholic faith and destined to salvation, has, on account of its sins for which adequate penance was not done on earth, to endure torments in a definite place appointed for all. Those tortures may be alleviated and shortened by the prayers and masses of the survivors as well as by indulgences. Since Purgatory is merely hell abated and reduced to temporal limits, its punishments are represented as torture by fire, and in this way literal fire comes upon the soul. Later Catholic theology with its discreet participation in the 'Illumination'<sup>1</sup> is disposed to see in the fire merely a figurative expression for

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 97.



the torture of the conscience, which alone consumes the soul. In the resolution of the Council of Florence certainly purifying punishments only were mentioned, since the Greeks, with whom this Council concluded a supposed union, had reasons for disallowing a purificatory fire. Moreover, Trent<sup>1</sup> abides by the general expression, 'purification' (*Purgatorium*), and exhorts that it be diligently preached, but with the omission of nice questions, greed, superstition, and all that savours of scandalous gains. The Roman Catechism<sup>2</sup> makes use of the popular expression, 'Purgatory.' The ecclesiastical tradition, attested by Bellarmine<sup>3</sup>, thinks simply of an ordinary fire, and this is made plain by boxes for offerings exhibited under the authority of the Church to receive contributions for masses on behalf of souls. These boxes, found in numbers at pilgrimage resorts, e.g. at Altötting, impress the public imagination with their flames. A picture painted or hung upon them exhibits a number of little naked souls. Tongues of flame rise from a glowing stream in which they are standing. Accordingly the modern theological view is a development, which certainly is at variance with tradition, yet is reconcilable with the dogma, so far as it still abides by its central import, viz. a painful time of penance for the departed, to be eased through the aid afforded by the living.

The Scriptural support appealed to for Purgatory in an incident of Maccabean time involves certainly the most important feature of pre-Reformation usage—a sum of money paid to the high priest, in order by means of a propitiatory sacrifice to procure on the occasion of the Resurrection of the dead forgiveness

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XXV, Decr. de Purg. S. VI. can. 30.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *I. 7. 3.* [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *De Purg. II. 11.* [H.]



of sins for those fallen in battle, in whose case indications pointing to idolatry had been discovered<sup>1</sup>. This involves, according to the view of later Judaism, the possibility of a change in the fate of those already dead, whereas, in accordance with the Canonical Books of the Old Testament<sup>2</sup>, the grace of God does not extend over this realm of the departed. The appeal to the New Testament<sup>3</sup> depends merely upon a proverbial form of speech, which has nothing to do with the world beyond the grave.

From the sacrifices for the dead offered in ancient Rome along with Christian prayers for the loved departed, joined to the consideration that the long interval between the death of individuals and the final Judgement might have some healing and saving efficacy for them, there arose conjectures which attained a permanent and popular shape by means of Gregory the Great. He knew how to relate that souls had appeared to him with entreaties for aid to escape from Purgatory. Whatever one may think of the historical sources of this belief, every one acquainted with history will admit that it was first through the agency of this Pope that Purgatory, while remaining alien to the Eastern Church, became a power in the consciousness of the Western. Later, the interest in it came to be joined on to the question of indulgences.

The Reformation rejected Purgatory mainly on account of its being mixed up with indulgences and other superstitions, as a spectre raised by the devil. In the next place man's reconciliation with God by means of his own works and penances was held to be at variance with the chief article of the faith. Moreover, no directions had been given us by God as to

<sup>1</sup> 2 Macc. xii. 40 ff.    <sup>2</sup> Ps. lxxxviii. 10-12; Isa. xxxviii. 18.    <sup>3</sup> 1 Cor. iii. 15.



the dead, and the souls that appeared seeking help were illusions of the devil.

It was urged to the credit of Purgatory that it keeps alive in the people belief in the immortality of the soul, and this must be admitted. The wife of a citizen in Rome, as having Protestants in her part of the city, desired to play the strong-minded female, and boasted that she did not believe in God the Father (*padre eterno*); she believed only in the *anime benedette*, the souls in Purgatory, but in nothing beyond. But for the growing popular intelligence the disappearance of the mythical symbol readily involves that of the truth of the idea as well. Möhler objected to the Protestant view that in the absence of Purgatory it either allows men to enter heaven defiled with sin, or considers death to be a sudden magical change, by means of which sins mechanically and forcibly fall off from us together with the body.

Certainly the one thing is as little conceivable as the other. The majority of those dying are perhaps too good for hell, but surely too bad for heaven. It must be freely conceded that in Reformation Protestantism there is on this point a lack of clearness, while its justifiable negations had not yet advanced to affirmations. Protestant learning has long noticed this, and, attaching itself to the old doctrine of the Alexandrian school—not to their mythical and imaginary picture of the purificatory passage of all souls through the fiery stream of a scorching world, but to their moral belief in the indestructibility of human freedom—it has recognized God's gracious administration as extended to the next world, and the capacity of the human spirit for development. Möhler holds it to be strictly characteristic of Catholicism that it 'can never



think of man apart from his spontaneity', and he describes Purgatory as the entrance of the various believers, who have departed with the covenant token of love, 'into such conditions as correspond to their spiritual life, which is still deficient as to religion and morality, and render it perfect.' Thus our Protestantism has come to a tolerable understanding with this Purgatory, at once elucidated and extinguished. For it is no longer a bare place of torture, which certainly, however it may invigorate by pain and conflict, would no more than a house of correction be a rightful purification for all souls. Rather it is now a path to toilsome, and so also cheerful activity. But how indulgences are in keeping with this, so as to shorten or cancel a condition which is necessary for the soul, or at any rate conducive to its purification and development, is quite inexplicable.

Nevertheless even according to the actual Catholic dogma, so far as Purgatory is held to be a place of purifying, and thus to exercise a curative power, an abatement by human intervention cannot take place, for we must plainly entrust to the Divine power what human wisdom can never achieve, viz. the provision that the sufferings inflicted in the other world, and experienced as punishments, shall not last beyond the time that the believer has need of their purging effects for his moral strengthening. If apart from this Divine justice should need further satisfaction it has been provided by the Sacrifice and the High Priest at Golgotha once for all. To disclaim this, and to hold that not for our own moral welfare, but as a necessity on God's side, our petty human acts of satisfaction in the way of penance, or in lieu of them indulgences, are needful—which latter in the case of the dead bear absolutely no



relation to their moral receptivity—this is certainly prejudicial to the honour of Christ, and in particular to the recognition of what He accomplished for us.

The doctrine concerning *the treasure of the Church* has, when rightly understood, a good meaning. From every man, who is highly gifted and who uses his gifts in accordance with the mind of God, a blessing goes forth over those who have intercourse with him, in proportion to the direction in which his activity is exercised; a blessing consisting of bodily, intellectual, moral, or religious advancement. Passing far beyond his individual being it advances, in accordance with the particular character of that being, from generation to generation. This blessing of a life guided by religion and morality is in its highest potency derived from Christ, and flows through the world, creating eternal life. This is the water which in those who drink from it becomes a living source, which for themselves springs up unto eternal life, but also, having for its characteristic the property of giving life to others, mingles with that main stream, and on being thus united becomes an irresistible power. That is the true treasure of the Church, this handing down of Divine life, which vanquishes opposition, attracts what is cognate, and develops what belongs to itself into a fairer harmony, so that, as at Jerusalem in the primitive Church no one said of temporal goods that they were his own, but they had all things common<sup>1</sup>, the same holds of the eternal, spiritual possessions. Moreover, sufferings in Christ's cause appertain to this common stock, as St. Paul in this relation regarded his painful conflicts as a filling up of the sufferings of Christ<sup>2</sup>, and Origen held martyrdom, the blood of

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Col. i. 24.



which mingles with Christ's blood, as a continued redemption. But that which accrues to every one through growing up under Christian influences and self-surrender to these, they took up in a mechanical and narrow sense. Thus the sufferings of the saints, which were unmerited by themselves and therefore unprofitable apart from their being reckoned to the credit of the sinful, were taken to be a treasure-house of the Roman Church from which the Pope is to draw individual good works and unmerited sufferings, which are superfluous possessions to the owners, and to reckon them to the account of those who need them, in former days actually in consideration of ready money payment. In particular, when this is set down to the credit of the dead in Purgatory, who have no consciousness of it and no moral share in carrying it out, what else is this than a piece of magic, the dead *opus operatum*? Modern Catholic theology modestly denies the scholastic conception of this in its general teaching as to a Sacrament, but cheerfully assumes it again in its dealing with the Sacraments individually, and must assume it conformably to the usage of its Church, perhaps, like St. Thomas Aquinas, in the hope that the Church does nothing in vain. The consideration is irresistible in its force, that in the cases where an indulgence is harmless, namely for a truly penitent heart, it is also profitless.

He who takes an impartial survey of the history of the Sacrament of penance cannot disallow that even the Roman Church did its best, first among over-civilized and then among untutored nations, to introduce a good moral discipline, while she also made use of the sins of mankind with much cleverness, in order to found upon them her rule and her power.



## CHAPTER VII

### THE LORD'S SUPPER

THE Catholic Church teaches that by the words of consecration spoken by the priest, bread and wine are transmuted into the Body and Blood of Christ as a *change* of their substances (*transsubstantiation*), so that only the appearance (the accidents) of bread and wine remain<sup>1</sup>, but the Body and Blood of Christ, together with His Soul and Divinity, are actually present<sup>2</sup>, in order that they may be eaten, and, in the case of the priest, drunk, that they may be continuously presented to God as a memorial and repetition of the Sacrifice at Golgotha; moreover that they may be adored in the sacred act itself as well as in the subsequent reservation of them.<sup>3</sup> Thus there arose a cult which in the mass, as a festival in which the God-Man is present to the senses, is calculated to make a powerful impression upon the religious imagination, and which is as well adapted to draw to itself the silent devotion of every day as to form the central feature consecrating great church festivals. That which for over a thousand years has edified and exalted so many generations of men, in any case possesses a share in Christian truth; but the question arises whether that is the complete truth unmixed with errors or abuses.

#### A. Transubstantiation.

Apologists for *Transubstantiation* appeal to Holy *Scripture*, to unanimous *tradition*, and even to *reason*.

<sup>1</sup> *Conc. Trid. Sessio XIII*, can. 2. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* can. 1. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* can. 6. [H.]



The appeal to the Bible rests upon the words of our Lord in administering, when He brake the bread and gave it to His disciples : ' This is My body <sup>1</sup> ;' and upon His Apostle's words of warning, that he who unworthily eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord is guilty of His broken Body and shed Blood <sup>2</sup>. The connexion of the subject and predicate in a sentence by the simple verb ' to be ', or, as was probably the case in the Hebraic dialect in which the words of institution were spoken, the bare juxtaposition of these, may certainly betoken full identity, if, e. g., we say, pointing to a book, ' This is the Holy Scripture,' or, when classifying a definite object under its general conception, ' Bread is a source of nourishment.' But if we were to say, ' Bread is gold,' or, in accordance with a favourite saying of the time, ' Lumps of coal are black diamonds,' no one in these cases would think of identity, but merely of some sort of relation as existing between these two objects. So too the consecrated bread and the Lord's Body are different things, and the Catholic dogma is so far from asserting their identity that it rather asserts the annihilation of the one, the disappearance of the bread as regards its essence, in order that the other, the Body of the God-Man, may be its substitute. Accordingly there can only be intended a relation between the two, and the question is, What relation? According to Catholic teaching it is one of transmutation. In the natural course of things, this could only take place as the consequence of a development. Thus we may say, when regarding a butterfly sporting among flowers, ' This is the caterpillar which crawled over the leaves and

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 26 ff. ; Mark xiv. 22 ff. ; Luke xxii. 19 f.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27.



gnawed them.' This again is not the idea here, but a miracle by which an ordinary article of food disappears and a celestial substance takes its place. It will not be asserted that this is necessarily contained in the words of institution. It is certainly conceivable in itself that our Lord, surrounded in His departing meal with images of death, just as the loving anointing by Mary appeared to Him as an anointing for His burial<sup>1</sup>, seeing in the bread that He brake the token of the breaking of His Body, now near, and in the wine the symbol of His Blood to be poured out, simply desired to establish with these solemn symbols a meal that should be a memorial of this sacrificial Death for the salvation of the world, as the account of St. Paul and St. Luke indicates, or that His speech expresses some other sort of relationship between the bread and His Body, now set apart for death.

The linguistic style of Holy Scripture in many like expressions nowhere suggests the thought of a transmutation. We find: 'The seven good kine are seven years,'<sup>2</sup> 'The ten horns are ten kings,'<sup>3</sup> 'The field is the world,'<sup>4</sup> 'The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches,'<sup>5</sup> 'The Rock was Christ.'<sup>6</sup> We cannot withhold our admission that here only a symbolic relation is indicated, however profound and marvellous this symbol may be to understand, but the 'is' here means no more than *comprehends*. When our Lord said to the son of Jonas: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church,'<sup>7</sup> Catholics, much as they might desire to take these words as far as possible *au pied de la lettre*, yet never thought that St. Peter

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 12.<sup>2</sup> Gen. xli. 26.<sup>3</sup> See Dan. vii. 24.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii. 38.<sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 20.<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. x. 4.<sup>7</sup> Matt. xvi. 18.



was actually changed into a rock, like Lot's wife into a pillar of salt<sup>1</sup>. When the Son of God, raised upon that cruel substitute for a deathbed, spoke the words: 'Behold thy son! behold thy mother!'<sup>2</sup> who would care to deem that to be a bare symbol, or doubt that thenceforward St. John showed her all filial affection, and that she regarded him as a son, so far as such a mother could think yet of any other son? nevertheless that private testament which bequeathed His Mother to the favourite disciple—private in contrast with His testament to the world, viz. the Holy Communion—changed nothing, and displayed nothing supernatural, but merely established a purely human, moral relationship.

But Christ says of Himself in His parable of the Shepherd: 'I am the door of the sheep.'<sup>3</sup> He says this with solemn affirmation and repetition. Is this no image? Nay, but it is one of deep meaning. With the same fullness of meaning He expressed His relation to Christianity as a whole: 'I am the true vine.'<sup>4</sup> The true vine is not the literal one, but the simile adopted by Him and introduced into a higher sphere of the religious life of successive generations. In a manner similar to this He termed the broken bread His Body. If we desire to have His own explanation, it lies before us in the sixth chapter of St. John. Whether He or the Apostle whom He loved thought already at that time of the last Supper or not, there is the same mode of contemplation in the bold style of oriental imagery. The hallowed eating of His Flesh, the drinking of His Blood, is equivalent to salvation arising out of spiritual communion with Him, in parti-

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xix. 26.

<sup>2</sup> John xix. 26 f.

<sup>3</sup> John x. 7.

<sup>4</sup> John xv. 1.



cular by means of His Sacrifice. With regard to the religious significance of eating the actual flesh, although glorified and concealed under the veil of bread, He with forecast of the future pronounced the decision: 'It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing.'<sup>1</sup>

But when St. Paul wrote his startling expression as to eating and drinking condemnation to oneself in the Holy Communion<sup>2</sup>, he did not think of any sort of dogmatic view as to the relation of the bread to the Body of the Lord, but, rebuking the unloving manner in which the community at Corinth celebrated the Meal of love, where with unchristian severance of rich and poor the one party were hungry and the other were drunken, he avails himself of the illustration thus presented, and startling to the imagination, in order to designate the unworthy celebration of the death of the Lord as a sharing in the guilt of His death, a becoming guilty of His Body and Blood.

Accordingly it is not Holy Scripture from which the dogma of the Catholic Church is framed. She must then have received a revelation disclosing an altogether peculiar interpretation. On behalf of such she appeals to a uniform tradition, before the undeniable character of which, as the Roman theologian assures us, Protestant theology has already laid down its arms. The fact alluded to is merely this, that learned Protestants have given up what in the heat of controversy had been asserted. They no longer regard the monk Paschasius Radbertus<sup>3</sup> in the ninth century as the inventor of that which was afterwards termed Tran-

<sup>1</sup> John vi. 63.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 29.

<sup>3</sup> A monk, and afterwards abbot, of Corbie, who presented his treatise on the subject to Charles the Bald in 844.



substantiation. But a close investigation, far from finding a uniform tradition upon the subject, perceives various natural stages of development of this dogma. Let us first with Perrone have recourse to the Church Fathers of the first three centuries, of whom surely it is to be expected that the stream of tradition, being still near its source, will present itself conspicuously clear.

The words 'Body and Blood of the Lord', echoing His voice who uttered them, and at once received into forms of worship, come to be used without hesitation in solemn speech for 'bread and wine'. The only question is how far this was done with the consciousness that they have not merely the symbolic sense of representing His broken Body and His Blood poured out, and thus serving for the celebration of His Sacrifice. Moreover, in conformity with the whole tendency of Church life, there presented itself as early as the second century a belief in something mysterious and supernatural. In the nightly celebration of the meal, which as substitute for, as well as imitation of, the pagan mysteries, was itself solemnized as a mystery, the Sacrament appeared to be given with the words: 'This is My Body; this is My Blood.' Accordingly, owing to hostile misconceptions on the part of the heathen, the report went about of barbarous usages, Thyestian banquets among Christians, just as in the popular imagination of the Middle Ages, and even to-day in the Christian East, the story goes that the Jews at Passover kill a Christian child in order to prepare their Easter cakes with his blood. Opposition to Docetism, which considered the earthly Being Christ to have been a mere phantom without flesh and blood, as well as hierarchical considerations, caused



this to be specially emphasized as in some way present in the Lord's Supper. Thus we read in a letter of Ignatius<sup>1</sup>: 'They (the Docetists) withdraw themselves from the sacred meal and from prayer, because they do not admit that the holy meal is the Flesh of the Saviour Who has suffered for our sins.' Not all persons possessed of Docetic views abstained from Holy Communion, but the memorial of that which erstwhile was flesh and blood, and the solemn rite of participation in it in connexion with Him Whom they looked upon as the Prince of spirits, might appear to them uncanny. The use made of it by the hierarchy we notice for the first time in the formula with which Novatian, the rival bishop of Rome to Cornelius, and an otherwise seriously minded man, delivers the elements to his supporters: 'Swear to me by the Body and Blood of the Lord never to desert me.'<sup>2</sup>

Perrone makes things quite easy for himself, inasmuch as he adduces in order the more ancient Fathers as witnesses, in virtue of one of their familiar expressions in which there is some reference to flesh and blood in the Holy Communion, without reflecting in what way, and how qualified by their method of viewing other matters. Thus he appeals to the words of St. Ignatius already adduced. But the same Father also writes<sup>3</sup>: 'Renew yourselves in faith, which is the Flesh of the Lord, and in love, which is Christ's Blood.' In this we perceive the freedom of symbolism with which this early Christian speaks of flesh and blood, as freely and symbolically as his Lord Himself. In the early stages of more definite views two lines

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Smyrnenses*, c. 7. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. *Hist. Eccl.* VI. 43. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Ad Trallianos*, c. 8. [H.]



of thought present themselves, designated the *Asiatic* and the *African* schools.

The *Asiatic* view, also transplanted by Irenaeus to the West, considered the Divine Logos in its spiritual capacity as bound up with the consecrated bread and wine in like manner as He had united Himself with the human germ in the bosom of Mary. Thus the Body is His renewed Body, and the result of partaking is for the faithful the immortality of their bodies, in other words, their resurrection. Hence both these statements take their origin, first, that hereby a change takes place in *our* bodies, and, secondly, that the consecrated bread is changed into the Body of the Divine Logos. Moreover, the latter is not the transmutation intended in the Catholic dogma, for according to this view bread and wine continue to be as necessary, in the capacity of vehicles of the Divine Logos, as was formerly the human Body of the God-Man. So Justin Martyr<sup>1</sup>: 'We receive not ordinary bread nor ordinary drink; but as our Saviour, Who by means of the Divine Logos became flesh, took flesh and blood for our redemption, so we have been taught that the food blessed by the words of prayer received from Him—food from which our flesh and blood receive nourishment to bring about their *transformation*—is the Flesh and Blood of that Jesus Who became flesh.' The same Father also furnishes the following earliest description of the sacred rite<sup>2</sup>: 'The deacons distribute to each of those present some of the bread, wine, and water, over which a thanksgiving has been spoken, and they bring these to the absent.' Again<sup>3</sup>, 'Christ delivered us the bread to make it to be a *memorial* of His becoming flesh for the sake of

<sup>1</sup> *Apol.* I. c. 66. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* c. 65. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *C. Tryph.* c. 70. [H.]



those who believe on Him, and He gave the cup that they might thankfully make it to be *a memorial* of His Blood.' The following are the words of St. Irenaeus<sup>1</sup> against heretics who denied the Resurrection: 'How do they say that flesh encounters dissolution and has no part in life, while it has nevertheless been nourished by the Body of the Lord and by His Blood? For as earthly bread which has received the call of God is no more common bread but the Eucharist, consisting of *two constituent elements*, one earthly and one heavenly; so too our bodies which have received the Holy Communion are no more perishable, inasmuch as they have the hope of the Resurrection.'

The older *African* school considered bread and wine as symbolical of Christ's Body, while the reception of them represents, i. e. sets forth externally, the actual partaking of the Divine Logos by the faithful. So Tertullian, speaking of Christ: 'He did not disdain water with which He purifies His own, nor oil with which He anoints them, nor bread by which He represents His own Body.' This Church teacher only incidentally mentions the Lord's Supper; his clearest reference to it being in his controversial treatise against Marcion<sup>2</sup>, who, inspired by the grandeur of Christianity, contempt for the world, and antipathy to Judaism, taught that the severe God of the Old Testament, the Creator of the world, is only a Being of an inferior sort, that the God of love was first revealed by Christ, and that the miserable productions of the Creator of the world are much too insignificant for the Saviour, Who only walked upon the earth as a spirit, to sully Himself with them. In opposition to this severance of Christianity from all nature and

<sup>1</sup> IV. 18. 5. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 108.



historical reality Tertullian appeals to the fact that Christ without hesitation made use of earthly things for the attainment of His religious aim. As in water and oil, being the elements of Baptism, He perceives nothing miraculous, but nevertheless a religious signification, so too is it in case of bread in the Holy Communion, only that this *represents* the Body of the Saviour<sup>1</sup>. Then further he has to show that Christ had an actual Body, and by the intentional fulfilment of prophetic types acknowledged the Old Testament ordering of the world. For this purpose also the Holy Communion serves him: 'Distributing the bread to His disciples He made it to be His Body, in that He said, "This is My body," i. e. the representation of My Body.'<sup>2</sup> But that He distinctly appointed bread and wine as symbols of His Body and Blood was done for the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy; for it is written: 'Come, let us cast the wood upon its bread.'<sup>3</sup> This, according to an interpretation then in vogue, means: 'Let us lay the Cross upon His Body.' Thus here His Body is called bread, as in the Holy Communion He calls bread His Body. Moreover, as it is said in the blessing of Judah, of the stock of whom Christ came: 'He hath washed his garments in wine, and his vesture in the blood of grapes'<sup>4</sup>, so He also now made wine to be the Sacrament of His Blood, that is, He consecrated wine to be the *memorial* of His Blood.'<sup>5</sup> It is in fact only the highly religious nature of Tertullian holding in contempt, as it did, everything corporeal, that led him in this matter to be in agreement with the philo-

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Marcion.* I. 14. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Ib.* IV. 40. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Following the erroneous Septuagint rendering in Jer. xi. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Gen. xlix. 11.

<sup>5</sup> *Adv. Marcion.* IV. 40. [H.]



sophical school of Alexandria, otherwise alien to his views. In accordance with the general principles of the latter they were able to grasp everything corporeal only in a spiritual way. To them therefore the Holy Communion was an intellectual and religious reception of the Body of Christ. So St. Clement of Alexandria<sup>1</sup>: 'Scripture termed the wine the mysterious symbol of the sacred Blood. The Blood of the Lord is twofold, the one *material*, by which we are redeemed from destruction, the other *spiritual*, by which we are anointed, and this is the meaning of drinking the Blood of Jesus, viz. the sharing in the eternal existence of the Lord. The combination of the two, the drink and the Logos, has been called the Holy Communion, a beauteous gift, by which those who receive it *in faith* are sanctified in body and soul.' Origen<sup>2</sup> says: 'The communicant profits by the bread of the Lord, if he partakes of the bread with pure conscience. In itself to abstain does not simply by virtue of our abstaining deprive us of any benefit, nor do we abound in any benefit through eating; for the cause of the deprivation is wickedness, and the cause of the abundance is righteousness. The food consecrated by the Divine Logos and prayer goes as regards its material constituent into the stomach, and is cast out into the draught, but through the prayer added to it, according to the measure of faith, it becomes profitable, and that which brings profit is not the material of the bread but the Word of God which is spoken over it. So much for the *typical* and *symbolical* Body; but there might be much to say as to the Logos Himself, Who became *flesh* and *real* food. He who eats this will

<sup>1</sup> *Paedagog.* II. 21. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *In Matth.* xi. 14. [H.]



certainly live for ever; for no sinner is capable of eating it.'

In so sharp a distinction of the spiritual, supramundane contents from their mundane symbol, although a Society founded on the basis of religion is properly speaking not disposed in the case of a symbol to separate the thought from the image, they yet looked upon the latter not as something empty and dead, but charged with spiritual nourishment from God, which, however, according to this it contains only in case of moral receptivity 'according to the measure of faith'. St. Cyprian, although also the genuine follower of Tertullian, in that he saw in the wine of the Holy Communion only a token of the Blood of Christ<sup>1</sup>, has no hesitation in making plain, after the manner of the Apostle, the sin of those who, when they have in time of persecution denied Christ, push their way back into the body of communicants without rightful penance: 'Violence is done to His Body and Blood, and they now sin more against the Lord in act and speech than when they denied Him.'<sup>2</sup> Moreover he has various stories to relate: how, e. g., a baby, who without the knowledge of its Christian parents had had given to it some food belonging to an idolatrous feast, and then had been brought to the administration of the Lord's Supper, falls into convulsions, and is forced to expel that portion of the contents of the consecrated cup which it had swallowed; or how others, who from fear of death had taken part in a sacrificial meal, when they then desired to take the consecrated bread, find a flame vomiting itself against them, or the bread in their hand turns to ashes<sup>3</sup>. Origen, who himself ventures the bold assertion: 'It is not that visible

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* 73. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *De Lapsis*, c. 16. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.* c. 26. [H.]



bread which the Lord held in His hand that He called His Body, but the Divine Word, in whose mysterious consecrating power it was to be broken,'<sup>1</sup> does not hesitate to draw a warning from the customary timorous care in public worship not to allow crumbs of the Body of the Lord to fall from carelessness and so to perish : 'Do you think that it is a less guilty thing to neglect the Word of God than His Body ?'<sup>2</sup>

In vain therefore do we seek in the first centuries of the Church for the idea of Transubstantiation. *Once*, however, it is found, and that too in full operation, but in very dubious hands, viz. in those of the heretic Marcus<sup>3</sup>, who in administering the Lord's Supper to his adherents changed the wine before their eyes into the colour of blood ; in any case a piece of jugglery as well as a prophecy, or rather a satire upon the future dogma<sup>4</sup>. This is the same Marcus of whom it is reported that he prepared love potions. It is a fact that young women who had been abused had cause to complain seriously of him.

While from the time of the Council of Nicaea the consciousness of the Church with regard to the nature of the God-Man developed itself through a long internal conflict, this also necessarily brought about a higher view of Holy Communion. From the fifth century individual voices are raised against the conception that bread and wine are bare symbols ; a view which thus, since it never was the special doctrine of a sect, up to that time held its position unchallenged in the Church. At length the second Council of Nicaea (787) incidentally entered this protest : 'Neither the Lord nor the

<sup>1</sup> *In Matth.* xi. 14. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Hom. XIII in Exod.* [H.]

<sup>3</sup> A Gnostic, who taught in the middle of the second century.

<sup>4</sup> *Iren.* I. 13. 2. [H.]



Apostles nor Fathers called the bloodless sacrifice offered by the priest a *figure*, but the actual Body and actual Blood. It pleased some Fathers that they should before the consecration be called *figurative representations*, but after the consecration they come to be called, and are, in the proper sense, the Body and Blood of Christ.' This is indeed not verified by history, but it was the negative commencement to the establishment of a doctrine of the Church. What in point of fact prevailed between the two Councils of Nicaea was the belief in a miraculous union of the Virgin-born with the bread and wine. The line of teaching which had its source in Alexandria called this a *transformation*, alluding and appealing to the miracle of Cana, but only in the sense of an elevation from the purely natural to a higher religious sphere. Thus St. Cyril of Jerusalem<sup>1</sup>: 'As after the invocation of the Holy Spirit the bread is no longer common bread, so the holy oil is no longer common oil, but Christ's gracious gift.' The literal transformation would have corresponded to that view of the God-Man which was extruded from the Catholic Church as the Monophysite heresy<sup>2</sup>, the human nature of Christ merging in the Divine, the earthly element in the Lord's Supper merging in the heavenly. The view is expressly opposed. Theodoret<sup>3</sup>, e. g., says: 'Not even after the consecration do the mysterious symbols lose their proper nature, for they remain in their previous *substance*, but they are understood as being that which they have come to be, and they are believed in and adored, as being that which they are believed to be.'

<sup>1</sup> *Orat. Myst.* III. 3. [H.] He was bishop there, and d. circ. 386.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 152.

<sup>3</sup> *Dialog.* II. [H.] He was a Greek theologian, Church historian, and commentator; bp. of Cyrus (or Cyrrhus) near the Euphrates; d. circ. 457.



At the ecumenical Council of Chalcedon Theodoret was expressly recognized as orthodox, and his condemnation at the ecumenical Council of Constantinople was not on account of his teaching as to the Holy Communion. Even in a dogmatic treatise which bears the name of Gelasius, bishop of Rome, the repugnance of the faithful to what was subsequently the Roman doctrine is expressed with perfect clearness: 'The Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ is a Divine thing, whereby we become partakers of the Divine nature, and yet it does not cease to be the *substance* or *nature* of bread and wine. And undoubtedly it is the figure and semblance of the Body and Blood of Christ to which honour is done in the celebration of the mysteries.' Even St. Augustine, who is still the common spokesman of the faith for both the Romish and Reformed Churches, however lofty the flight of rhetoric with which he utters the praise of the Body and Blood of our Lord as verily present in Holy Communion, whatever the skilful turn of phrase with which he exclaims<sup>1</sup>: 'The martyrs drank *His* blood, they poured out *their own* blood for Him!' nevertheless, like Origen, lays the chief stress upon the spiritual tasting<sup>2</sup>: 'Why dost thou make ready teeth and stomach? *believe*, and thou hast eaten!' In the sharpest contrast with the subsequent reception by the sense of touch, he distinguishes the religious impression from the thrill of the miraculous<sup>3</sup>.

But the miraculous participation in the Flesh and Blood of One glorified and ruling the world presented itself most naturally to the popular comprehension simply as a magical transformation. The existence of this belief in its popular form is first attested by a

<sup>1</sup> *De Sym.ad Cat.* II. 6. [H.]    <sup>2</sup> *In Io. tract.* 25. [H.]    <sup>3</sup> *De Trin.* III. 10. [H.]



story taken from the life of Gregory the Great<sup>1</sup>. He offers a woman the consecrated bread with the accustomed formula of administration: 'The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ preserve thy soul!' Thereupon she laughs. He at once draws back his hand, and after the conclusion of the mass asks her why she laughed. On her answering that she cannot but have the best reason for knowing that this is not the Body of our Blessed Lord, because she baked this bread herself, he lays the portion assigned to her under the altar-cloth, and exhorts the people to pray to God that, in order to strengthen the faith of the woman, the Lord would show in a visible form what she was not capable of believing with the eyes of the soul. He raises the cloth, and instead of the bread there appears a bloody finger. He re-covers it, and prays as before, and when he once more raises the cloth, the bread lies beneath it again. Possibly there is here presented to us a piece of hierarchical sleight of hand, the Catholic counterpart of the heretic Marcus's transformation of wine. Gregory, that magnificent compound of an imaginative nature and a vigorous understanding, of pious narrowness and sagacious instinct for rule, relates for his own edification and that of the faithful stories of a similar kind, in most cases certainly as vouched for merely by the devout of his *entourage*, but in some cases as even experienced by himself. Yet since he is silent about that experience which would have been so completely in keeping with his own powers of observation, and since the narrative is found first in biographies dating more than a century after his death, and moreover that a woman laughed in the middle of a solemn celebration necessarily very familiar

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 30.



to her is unlikely, it follows that there is perhaps here presented to us a legend of later origin, which, however, none the less testifies to the belief in an actual transformation in the eighth century, and was cleverly enough devised to spread its popularity.

While thus an actual and corporeal transformation is considered to occur, of which, however, the eye sees nothing, the hand feels nothing, the lip tastes nothing, subsequent theology excused or justified this so far as to say sometimes that a natural shrinking from eating actual flesh hinders it from appearing, sometimes that the faith which there believes what it does not see is to be thereby exercised and become meritorious. St. Catharine of Siena<sup>1</sup> was convinced that Christ placed the espousal ring upon her finger, and that she bore the marks of His wounds upon her body. But never did mortal eye see the ring or the marks of the wounds. The future saint had furnished herself with a satisfactory reason for this invisibility. On her own petition God so ordained it, that she might not be tempted to pride by being an object of amazement to the world as a visible miracle. Yet the whole Order of Franciscans would have sworn to its truth, while of our contemporaries few will refuse to allow that ring and wound marks existed only in the imagination of this maiden, whose fancy was as excitable as her inward piety was deep—a permanent fanciful picture, in which some true experience presented itself to her, indicating that she has surrendered her heart without reserve to Christ and passed her life in sympathy with His sufferings. If the case of the Flesh and Blood of the Holy Communion should not be considered a parallel one, yet the expectation was easily aroused

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 181.



that at any rate at one time or another, whether to silence doubt or to gratify an affectionate longing, the God-Man had come forth present to the senses from His invisibility. The Church of the ninth century already rejoiced in abundant legends after the manner of those of Gregory, that out of the consecrated bread and wine its true nature in the shape of a lamb or in the colour of flesh and blood became visible, as this no doubt on some occasion might strike a believer in the doctrine, or one still wrestling with this belief in the crowning moment of the sacramental solemnity. When the belief was once established, these stories then came to be reckoned as manifest proofs.

Of this kind in the later mediaeval times is the miracle of Bolsena<sup>1</sup>, which was immortalized by Raphael<sup>2</sup>. A priest is saying mass in the presence of Urban IV.<sup>3</sup> He is uttering over the bread the transmuting words, not himself believing in their power. Thereupon drops of blood welling from the host are startlingly eloquent against him; a miracle which was brought into connexion with the introduction of the Corpus Christi festival<sup>4</sup>. This legend in a more developed form shows through the drops of blood the outline of our Lord's face after the fashion of the Veronica<sup>5</sup> picture, while this quasi-documentary evidence is at the present day exhibited both on the

<sup>1</sup> A town seven miles SW. of Orvieto, Italy.

<sup>2</sup> Raphael Sanzio (or Santí) was born at Urbino in 1483; died in 1520 at Rome, where most of his famous works remain.

<sup>3</sup> Jacques Pantaléon, Pope 1261-4.

<sup>4</sup> Founded by Pope Urban in 1264, and kept on the Thursday next after Trinity Sunday.

<sup>5</sup> In Christian legend a woman of Jerusalem (said to have died at Rome) on whose handkerchief, given to our Saviour to wipe His brow while on His way to Calvary, was left an impression of His face. Her name (a corruption of Beronice) suggested the words *vera icon* (true picture) and thus gave rise to the legend.



stones of the altar at Bolsena, and on an altar-cloth at the neighbouring Orvieto. Some sacred spots have come into existence as such from the circumstance that a host covered with marks of blood was found perhaps hidden in a hollow tree. Modern learning has demonstrated the historical possibility, and at the same time the natural character of such an appearance. The Middle Ages found further proofs of a judicial character in some criminal proceedings against the Jews, who, moved by their very animosity to believe in the Church dogma, thought by piercing the host to crucify afresh the false Messiah. The rich Jew Eleazar at Sternberg in the Mecklenburg country was so determined to give a lustre to the marriage of his daughter in this way, that he bought from a venal priest for a high price a consecrated host which was pricked with needles by the wedding company. The report of this got about among the Christian population, and forthwith received from faithful lips the addition that drops of blood gushed out of the needle-pricks. Persons privy to the crime also confessed this on the rack. What in the world is there which is not confessed upon the rack? The luckless wedding party came to the scaffold.

When Paschasius Radbertus gathered up the still fluctuating ideas into this firm conception that the substance of the bread and wine through the all-embracing creative power of God is changed into the Body born of the Virgin, and for the first time put this forward in a special treatise<sup>1</sup>, the great literary opposition which arose against him shows, however, that this dogma was not yet the common property of the Church. But when two centuries later Berengarius<sup>2</sup> rejected the

<sup>1</sup> *De Corp. et Sang. Domini*, published in 831. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> A French ecclesiastic, died near Tours, 1088. His views were con-



actual transformation, preferring to recognize only a spiritual participation in the Body of Christ, the generality of the priests were in arms against him. Under Nicholas II <sup>1</sup> in Rome Berengarius was speedily forced to a confession, according to which the true Body of the Lord is broken sensibly and really by the hand of the priest and chewed by the teeth of the faithful. This is in truth as little an accurate setting out of the Catholic dogma as Gregory the Great's bloody finger; it is not one or another individual member of Christ's for Body that is parted by the teeth, but, however inconceivable this be, the whole Christ is partaken of. Berengarius, as soon as he again breathed free air, threw over the Roman confession with abhorrence, while he called the Pope not a priest but a butcher, and the Church of Rome a seat not of the Apostles but of Satan. But Gregory, the one truly 'great' <sup>2</sup> Gregory, before this, when legate in France, had extended his protecting hand over the noble schoolman who placed his faith in spiritual things, and had declared the acknowledgement that 'after consecration bread and wine are the Body and Blood of Christ' to be sufficient. He now caused statements of the Fathers upon the point to be collected, and the Mother of God to be inquired of by a holy hermit. She pronounced that what stands in Holy Scripture is sufficient, and that Berengarius is not at variance with this. But as soon as the emperor's party cries out in ringing tones that the Holy Father himself is a heretical follower of Berengarius, he does not care to shatter the world-wide authority which he

demned by various Councils, in consequence of which he made several recantations.

<sup>1</sup> Pope 1058-61.

<sup>2</sup> Gregory VII (Hildebrand). See vol. i. p. 169. The title is commonly given to Gregory I (590-604).



was beginning to obtain by the subtle definition of a dogma. Nevertheless he merely requires the acknowledgement of a conversion (*conversio*) of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of the Lord.

Since that time the dogma held its ground, although not unquestioned by teachers in the Catholic Church. Hildebert of Tours<sup>1</sup> invented for it the appropriate word Transubstantiation, and laid stress not upon the power of the Divine Creator, but upon the mighty utterance of the consecrating priest, who daily creates the God-Man with an incantation having its origin in an ingenious metaphor. Adopting this hierarchical view Innocent III in his great Lateran Council (1215) proclaimed it as a doctrine of the Church<sup>2</sup>, and declared at the same time that all the faithful were bound to receive this Sacrament, at any rate at Easter-tide. After the middle of that century it obtained a brilliant popular solemnization in the festival of Corpus Christi on a day devoid of traditional authority, and only established owing to priestly considerations. This the Council of Trent<sup>3</sup> designated as a triumphal progress of truth victorious over the lies of its enemies.

On the part then of those whom they term heretics and enemies of the truth let this be the answer and the laying down of arms as regards the unanimous *tradition* of this dogma: the simple historical demonstration how it gradually arose, not without many changes in its peculiar Catholic form, not from Divine revelation, yet always from a pure source of a human kind, from worship and from popular belief with its religious sentiments and fancies, although not apart from hierarchical aims.

<sup>1</sup> A French prelate and theologian, bp. of Angers, and afterwards abp. of Tours; d. 1134.

<sup>2</sup> *Conc. Later.* IV, can. 1. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Sessio XIII*, c. 5. [H.]



The appeal to the *reason* consists, strictly speaking, in the assertion that the human reason in its darkness and earthly limitations has nothing to say with regard to so high a mystery. We must accept this as the logical consequence of the position taken up. Moreover the version which Luther and which Calvin gave of the doctrine of the Holy Communion has need of the same protest against the claims of reason; while Zwingli's conception risks the introduction of an element of shallowness into the deep and serious sense of the solemn celebration. But how far the doctrine in any case is something which has come about and been devised by human instrumentality cannot be separated from the question whether it does not contain internal contradictions and destructive consequences, and still less from the question relating to its religious significance.

The doctrine of *the Accidents*, that they remain after the disappearance of the substance of the bread and wine, is, it is true, only a makeshift of the schoolmen, inasmuch as in spite of all transmutation, still for our perceptions it ever remains before our view as bread and wine, a match for the finest chemical analysis which would resolve bread and wine before as well as after the change always into the same original constituents. But that makeshift is necessary. It was put forth by Paschasius immediately on the first detailed statement in the literary discussion of the matter; moreover it was formally established at Trent as a doctrine of the Church. Its possibility is nothing at all transcending human reason, but rests upon the antiquated idea which thought of the accidents of a thing as something actually different from its substance, so that after the removal of the latter they could continue,



as though suspended in the air, whereas on the contrary they are nothing but in part the outward effects of this substance upon our senses, and in part the relations which that substance bears to the general laws of the world. Thus the taste of bread is but the outward effect of it upon our nerves of taste, the weight its relation to the earth's force of attraction; but, according to the Catholic dogma, the nourishing property of bread no less than its taste is considered to remain, after it has itself altogether ceased to be present. Its weight, a hundredweight or a grain, is still present, while that which weighed, i. e. was attracted by the mass of the earth, has disappeared.

What Origen could frankly admit<sup>1</sup>, since it had to do simply with bread and wine, which, like everything that enters the mouth, go the way of all flesh, Paschasius was obliged to disallow as lacking reverence in relation to the Lord's Body substituted for bread, and it was thenceforward repudiated by the Church's theology under the name *Stercoranism*. Paschasius took refuge in the assumption that the Body and Blood of the God-Man are something spiritual, which unite themselves to the spiritual man, and that therefore it were mere flippancy to think of digestion and its consequences<sup>2</sup>. Certainly the thought of such consequences is far removed from the religious sentiments which belong to the holy solemnity, but pious contemplation has its rights, viz. the religious criticism, which once called the Greeks' beautiful representations of their gods dumb idols. It also has its rights, which, true in themselves, must also be capable of being considered true in all their consequences, and flippancy

<sup>1</sup> See p. 245.

<sup>2</sup> *De Corp. et Sang.* c. 20. 3. [H.]



makes its way into the logical consideration of the matter, owing to the fact that Catholic teaching here presents us with something that is at once supra-sensuous and sensuous. Flesh and blood, as substances taking the place of the substance of bread and wine, however much belonging to a glorified Body, are still not simply spirit. Paschasius' mode of avoiding the difficulty would, when plainly thought out, lead to Calvin's conception of the doctrine, nay further, to a cherished opinion of Melancthon, that only spiritual communion with Christ is attested and nourished by the believer's solemn partaking of the Holy Communion. Scholastic lucubrations further inquired whether a mouse, if it gnaws the consecrated host, receives the God-Man into its intestines. If a gnat tastes of the consecrated cup and is drowned in the accidents of the wine, is it drowned in the Lord's Blood and its dead body penetrated by the same? Or, if the cup was poisoned—not an unheard-of thing in Italy—what then was to be done with God's Blood? We hear of modes of evasion and of admissions and counsels of casuistry as to the measures to be taken in a reverent manner under such circumstances with regard to the animal and the consecrated element. In logical consistency it must be admitted that the mouse has actually eaten a particle of the God-Man, and the case must be defended in some such way as this: the Almighty in His benignity permitted Himself to be crucified by the servants of an executioner, why not also to be consumed by a harmless beast? It reminds one of the story related of Buddha, that he threw himself as food to a starving tigress with her young.

But what then becomes of the Divine Flesh and



Blood which thus, considered as substance, enters at least daily the stomachs of a hundred thousand priests? The most agreeable view, and the one as a rule accepted, is that of St. Thomas Aquinas<sup>1</sup>, that the Body and Blood of Christ remain united with the accidents of bread and wine only so long as these undergo no change, by means of which the substance of the bread and wine, if it were still present, would have ceased to be such. Accordingly it would have to be supposed that as soon as digestion began to operate, or, in case of some mischance or abuse, corruption, then as though by sudden evaporation the Body and Blood of the Lord disappear. But then the further question presses, whither? Either this disappearance must be considered as annihilation, or, since that is scarcely conceivable, the august blessing only comes into being to disappear again (like the fly whose span of life is a day, lightly come, lightly gone), and has thus been taken up into the celestial abode of Christ. At the same time there rises before us a truly marvellous picture of the vast amount of the Flesh and Blood of the God-Man which has been accumulated there during many centuries. Moreover all this must have taken place either *à part from* Christ's co-operation, or *in conjunction with* it. As for the former case, it would be irreverent to assume that a priest could by his own power deal thus with that which is the most intimate possession of any other person whatever, viz. his body. As regards the second, we believe on Him as the One Who governs His Church and hearkens to every petition which is really made in His Name, i.e. in His Spirit, but this is the difficulty: to provide that every morning His Body and Blood should be present

<sup>1</sup> *Summa*, P. III, qu. 77, art. 4. [H.]



on a hundred thousand altars, and that after the consumption and before evening all should be taken up again into heaven, would certainly mean no slight burden in the shape of a day's work.

The Catholic Church directs that *adoration* should be paid in the presence of the host and of the cup, adding as reason that the cup and the host contain God present to the senses in this particular spot. The Council of Trent also maintains the traditional custom, although in opposition to the resolutions of older Councils, of reserving consecrated hosts in a sacred place, both in order to bring them solemnly to the sick, and to augment the sanctity of the church. This may appear to sentimental Catholics comforting and elevating. At any rate the two countesses in the story *Maria Regina*, as they see around them only Protestant churches, in which merely the Word and not the Body of God is to be found, utter this lament: 'Nowhere can the tearful eye and the troubled heart obtain repose in a church which contains the most sacred, most beloved Sacrament. Ah! the poor despoiled people (the Protestants)! how they are to be bemoaned!' But if the God-Man is contained in the reserved host and is an object of adoration, irrespective of that which contains it, then there arises the preposterousness of thinking of God as shut up in a box. Whatever dignified name it may receive, it remains local limitation. It is true that the Roman Catechism, herein at variance with monotheistic thought, asserts that Christ is not in the Sacrament as in a particular place, and yet not merely are His Flesh and Blood held to be present and to be adored in every consecrated host, but even nerves and bones and whatever else is peculiar to an actual body.



But if the God-Man is to be adored in the monstrance<sup>1</sup>, so too in the priest, in every creature that has partaken of the host, before its Divine and human substance evaporates. The believer is bound to adore Him in himself, and to fall down in adoration of himself; and the reproach of the Arabian philosopher, Averroes<sup>2</sup>, appears to be not without justification, 'The Christians adore what they eat.' Certainly the Catholic mass has at all times of the Church been celebrated by priests and laity with truly religious sentiments. What Christ ordained ceases under no shape or perversity of aspect to pour out its blessings, and it is only the seriousness of a critical investigation, with the duty of simply investigating the truth, which is justified in laying bare this perversity of aspect, whereby out of the deified host there certainly meets us a representation of God, worthy of being boldly compared to a shapeless idol of the East Indies, which nevertheless has also been the object of adoration on the part of pious worshippers for thousands of years.

But is this 'Eucharistic Christ' to be held as actually He that was born of the Virgin? So it is said by the majority of the Church teachers from the ninth century onwards. Gregory VII himself, in the liberally worded acknowledgement which he required from Berengarius, considered this to be necessary. Trent is silent upon this thorny question. The Roman Catechism affirmed it, adopting moreover St. Augustine's statement: 'To bear oneself in one's own hands is impossible for man and can appertain to Christ alone,

<sup>1</sup> The transparent receptacle in which the consecrated host is shown to the multitude.

<sup>2</sup> A distinguished Spanish-Arabian physician and commentator on Aristotle. He belonged to a noted family of jurists, and himself held judicial posts; d. 1198.



for He was borne in His own hands, when He Himself in offering His Body said, "This is My Body."<sup>1</sup> That distinguished Church teacher still loved glowing paradoxes of this sort, as a legacy from the time when he taught rhetoric. It may happen that a man holds one hand amputated with the other, as Rudolf<sup>2</sup>, the priest-king, when dying took hold of the hand which had been cut from him in the engagement, the hand that had formerly promised to his emperor that fidelity from which the Pope had set him free. But that a man with sound limbs should hold himself in his hands, is a thing that perhaps happens only in the case of acrobats! If Christ really offered His own flesh to the Apostles, it was not the Body born of the Virgin, which was then not yet broken, and not His heart's blood, which was certainly not yet shed. Moreover, it is impossible that the Apostles should have thought that it was. Accordingly it appears that the original Lord's Supper itself was administered without this being actually the case, and without any belief in it being entertained. As regards all subsequent transformations the Church's view is that Christ, unaffected by these, sits bodily as God-Man on the right hand of the Father in heaven. It follows that even if the Flesh and Blood which are daily evoked by every Catholic priest should be considered to stand in the closest and most miraculous connexion with the actual Body of Christ—nay, in their nature and effects to be like Him in essence—they would still not be the Body born of the Virgin, but only one made, or, if you prefer the expression, created afterwards.

<sup>1</sup> *Cat. Rom.* II. 4, 39, 28, August. *in Ps.* xxxvii. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Duke of Swabia. He was chosen king in opposition to Henry IV of Germany in 1077, and was supported by Pope Gregory VII.



But granted that this is what takes place, as the Catholic doctrine in contradiction to itself maintains, in that case Flesh and Blood, as broken and poured out, may very fitly serve to represent symbolically a complete personality glorified by His Sacrificial Death, and bestowing blessing, as is set forth in the Gospel of St. John<sup>1</sup>. But Flesh and Blood as actual substances, though they lay visibly upon the altar, like the little finger under the Pope's altar-cloth<sup>2</sup>, still in nowise testify in themselves to the presence of the whole living Christ and participation in Him. Certainly we do not desire to cheapen His Godhead. It is, if it be not considered idolatry to say so, everywhere present. To that end it stands in need of no Transubstantiation. Before the Godhead we may at all times fall down in adoration. There is on this point no controversy between the two Churches. But the soul of Christ is also held to be there, His whole personality, human and Divine. This is indeed a genuinely Christian belief, but if the miracle wrought in the Holy Communion consists only in this, that some bread is changed into the Body and wine into the Blood of Christ, this is yet by no means the whole Christ, such as He meant by the promise: 'Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them'<sup>3</sup>; and in such a manner without any transformation is He also present on each occasion in the Holy Communion, when celebrated duly and in faith.

Accordingly the investigation has passed from the purely dialectical controversy to the higher region of a distinctly religious question. Möhler thus vindicated the claims of the dogma of his Church: 'The Saviour did not merely live 1800 years ago, so as to have

<sup>1</sup> John vi.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 250.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xviii. 20.



disappeared since that time, leaving us only the power of remembering Him historically, as though some man who is dead; rather He is ever living in His Church, and in a sensible fashion such as can be comprehended by man's organ of sense He makes this perceptible in the Sacrament of the altar. In the preaching of the Word He is the permanent Teacher, in Baptism He without intermission takes up into union with Himself, in the institution of penance He forgives the repentant sinner, in Confirmation He strengthens the ripening years with the power of His Spirit, He breathes into bride and bridegroom a higher view of the relationships of wedlock, He unites Himself with all who sigh after eternal life in the most intimate manner under the forms of bread and wine, He comforts the dying in extreme unction, and in the hallowing of priests He establishes an Order, by which He effects all this with an energy that never grows weary.'

I can think of no reason why Protestantism should not adopt all this which is so beautifully expressed, with the exception perhaps of some part of the nomenclature which is peculiar to the Catholic Church. The view is our own, that the Church in the way of a living delineation is Christ appearing and working through all ages. But in this comparison of the Holy Communion with other religious acts of the Church there is absolutely nothing of a doctrine of transformation. Still is Christ ever the rightful Teacher by means of the Divine Word which He has left to us, and what is not derived from this or in conformity with it has at least no great claim to be heard. He still ever baptizes and blesses the infant through the Baptism which He ordained. So too He is present and imparts Himself in the Holy Communion in a visible manner,



so as to be perceptible to man's senses, viz. by symbols which represent His broken Body and His Blood. Where then would be the need of the actual change into His Body and Blood, such as would be neither perceptible nor comprehensible?

The Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> found time enough in passing to condemn the doctrine that the main benefit of this Sacrament is the forgiveness of sins. The Protestantism of the Reformers, who with St. Paul started from the feeling of the need of redemption and so found their way to the Redeemer, undoubtedly laid special stress upon this. Our Lord, too, assuredly laid stress upon it: 'The blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for many unto remission of sins.'<sup>2</sup> However, in the ordinary Protestant formula of administration, 'Take this and strengthen yourself in the faith,' in this saving faith, all is comprised which harmonizes and includes the religious life for sinners and sojourners here below. Therefore Protestantism without hesitation ascribes to the Holy Communion rightly used, as to the silver gleam of all Church life, every religious blessing which comes out of self-surrender to Christ and so out of fellowship with Him; as also Luther's *Small Catechism* adds to forgiveness of sins that in Holy Communion 'Life, righteousness, and salvation are given; for where forgiveness of sins is, there is also life and blessedness'. The doctrine of the Romish Church concedes, however, to the Sacrament of the altar the forgiveness of slight, venial sins, as well as security against mortal sins<sup>3</sup>. It is only the care to guard the rights of the Sacrament of penance, which according to custom and law precedes the Communion,

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XIII*, can. 5. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Sessio XIII*, c. 2; *Cat. Rom.* II. 4. 50. [H.]



that has caused the forgiveness of sins to be assigned in such scanty measure to the latter: in other respects the Council of Trent recognizes in the Holy Communion the source of the richest spiritual blessings. But the simple proclamation of God's Word guarantees all these as well, and, where it is received with open heart, an actual exalted spiritual union with Christ according to His own promise. Therefore, according to the Catholic dogma, there is every day set forth before our eyes, only that we do not see it, a huge miraculous luxury, in comparison with which when rightly considered all the miracles of Holy Scripture and all the marvellous legends of the ancient world appear insignificant, in order to effect something which can be and is effected simply by means of the preaching of the Gospel. But now, according to the Catholic restriction of efficacy of the Blood poured out, it applies to the forgiveness merely of venial, or little sins, peccadilloes, as the Jesuits call them, bagatelles. This is not the way that God is wont in other matters to work in His world, where He attains the greatest results by the simplest means. This lack of correspondence between means and end would disappear, if the other side of Transubstantiation, its application to the Sacrifice of the mass, had a proper and necessary significance.

### B. The Sacrifice of the Mass.

From the time of Gregory the Great the Catholic Church distinguished two aspects of the Holy Communion as a *Sacrament* and as a *Sacrifice*, so that the Council of Trent laid down its decisions as to both, the former under the name *Eucharist*, the latter as the *Mass*, in quite different sections, as the result of pro-



ceedings which were separated by more than a decade. This customary distinction understands by *Sacrament* the sacred act by which God assures us of His favour, by *Sacrifice* the act by means of which we offer to God in religious adoration something which at least in part ceases for the eye of sense to exist.

For the *Biblical* support of the Holy Communion as a bloodless sacrifice to be offered daily to the Deity for the living and the dead, theology appeals in the first place to the Passover meal as a sacrifice, the place of which is taken by the Lord's Supper. But it is only in the most general sense of sacrifice, as a sacred act embedded in a rich sacrificial worship, that the Passover lamb has been termed a sacrifice, while its characteristic feature was not the slaying in the outer court of the Temple, but the solemn consuming of it in the family circle. The Lord's Supper, according to the Johannine tradition, did not so much as have its immediate origin in the Passover meal, and was, at any rate from the first, separated from it in the Church of the Apostles as being celebrated daily, while the Christians of the Circumcision, and so incidentally the Apostles as well, as long as Jerusalem stood, continued there the Passover meal of their time as appointed by the Law. The sole feature in common with this which the Lord's Supper has is the character of a meal possessed of a religious consecration. Since the priest-king of patriarchal days, Melchizedek, was considered to be a type of Christ<sup>1</sup>, it was natural to see also in the bread and wine which he brought to Abraham a type of the Eucharist. Nevertheless he did not offer this as a sacrifice, but in hospitality.

When we are told of the teachers at Antioch that they

<sup>1</sup> Gen. xiv. 18, and Heb. vii.



'ministered to the Lord, and fasted,'<sup>1</sup> in the anxiety to find a proof passage this is in the most arbitrary manner referred to a service of sacrifice. When St. Paul addresses to the Corinthians his scruples as to taking part in sacrificial feasts, adding his reasons : 'Ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of devils,'<sup>2</sup> it is said that in this way, inasmuch as sacrifices were offered on heathen altars, the Christian feast too is designated as an actual sacrifice. But we have here the comparison, or rather the contrast, of the heathen *sacrificial* feasts and the Holy Communion as a *love* feast. Further, Perrone appeals to the Epistle to the Hebrews<sup>3</sup>. As a testament does not come to be of force till the death of the testator, and the old Covenant of God with His people was consecrated by blood, so too must the new Covenant be ; and as the blood was that of a sacrificed animal, so too the words of institution in the Lord's Supper must be understood of a sacrifice. But on the other hand the Cup, this blood of the new Covenant, is merely the antecedent shadow and figure of the Blood actually shed. That the Death of Jesus was also considered as a sacrificial death is a matter beyond controversy and question ; only it by no means follows therefrom that the Holy Communion too was a sacrifice, and to be repeated as such. Roman theology ought to make as little appeal as possible to the Epistle to the Hebrews, for this writing expressly and of set purpose declared in opposition to the Jewish priesthood and sacrificial worship, which required yearly and daily repetition, that Christ exercises a priesthood of permanent efficacy, never to be transferred to others, that He entered once for all into His

Acts xiii. 2

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. x. 21.<sup>3</sup> Heb. ix. 16 ff.



heavenly Sanctuary, and that He offered Himself as a Sacrifice eternally valid, bringing all other sacrifices to an end<sup>1</sup>. It is only a sophism to rejoin that it is true that Christ did away with the Old Testament priesthood and sacrificial system, but instituted a new one, which takes its place and daily repeats and applies to us the eternal efficacy of His Sacrifice. But if it is eternally efficacious, it does not need this repetition. In fact it is against this idea that the controversy is directed in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which along with Jewish sacrificial worship overthrows every other sacrificial worship; and what else has the Catholic priesthood come to be except under the mask of Christianity, so far as this was possible, the reinstatement of the Old Testament priesthood, after whose privileges it was sighing when it also claimed the tithe?

But, it is argued, Christ Himself ordered the repetition when He said: 'Do this in remembrance of Me.' But what was it that He then bid them do in remembrance of Him? It was to do as He Himself did; in the circle of Christian associates to partake of the blessed bread and the wine as His Body and Blood in the celebration of His Death for the purpose of the most intimate saving fellowship with Him. And what has the Roman Church made out of it? The Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of the God-Man, which has come into existence by a magical transformation. This sacrifice the priest, in most cases alone with his acolyte, offers daily to the Deity, in order to release a soul from Purgatory, or as commissioned for yet more dubious ends. It might easily have happened that in the general acceptance of

<sup>1</sup> Heb. vii. 24; ix. 12, 28; x. 10, 14, 18.



sacrifice as bearing a typical character our Lord might at least have termed His Supper a sacrificial feast. Accident, or rather a providential wisdom, has so arranged that among all the lofty expressions applied to that sacred meal, even in the Johannine tradition, there is to be heard absolutely nothing of a sacrifice.

Lastly, an appeal to the Old Testament takes hold of the great prediction of its latest prophet: 'I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense is offered unto My name, and a pure offering.'<sup>1</sup> This prediction, in the opening stages of whose accomplishment we are living, without having experience of its completion, is least of all fulfilled by the renewal of the Old Testament priesthood with its sacrificial worship, only raised to a higher level. Rather it is against that sacrificial worship by way of its rejection that the first part of this Divine utterance is permanently directed. The pure sacrifice is so called, in the view of the prophet, from the standpoint of his nation, instead of the blood of bullocks and of circumcision, the circumcised, i.e. the pure heart, which surrenders itself unconditionally to the will of God after the pattern of Christ. It is a prediction like that of our Lord Himself that the day is coming when men shall no more pray to God upon this mountain or upon that, but in spirit and in truth, and so not by any sort of sacrificial worship.

A representation lately found on a wall in the catacombs of St. Calixtus—a table with three loaves and a fish; baskets with loaves on either side—has

<sup>1</sup> Mal. i. 10 ff.



been appealed to as a speaking testimony to sacrificial gifts and a prepared sacrifice. The fish, as is well known, represents the anagram for Christ, and has to do with the meal, which is indicated as served for the Lord's Supper in memory of the meal of the Risen Saviour at the lake of Galilee. The Church Fathers, still living in the midst of the sacrifices of the ancient world, which as sacrificial feasts, and by means of the flesh of sacrifices exposed for sale, had taken a deep hold upon social and family life, termed the Holy Communion by way of contrast, substitution, and superiority to this sacrificial worship, a sacrifice with a gradual transition from figure to belief. But how far the most ancient expressions were still from the thought that there is here offered an actual sacrifice of the Body of the God-Man, is shown by the obviously figurative reference of the sacrifice to thanksgiving, especially for the means of subsistence, the grace belonging to the sacred meal. Thus Justin Martyr<sup>1</sup>: 'Of the sacrifices which Christ ordained, i. e. in the *thanksgiving* pronounced over the Bread and the Cup, which are offered everywhere on the earth by Christians, God has borne witness that they are pleasing to Him. *Prayers* and *thanksgivings* offered by those who are worthy are alone sacrifices perfect and acceptable to God.' And Irenaeus<sup>2</sup> says: 'Christ taught a new sacrifice appertaining to the New Testament, offered by the Church throughout the world to God, Who provides us with the means of subsistence, the firstfruits of His gifts.' The Greek designation, to which the Roman Church also adheres, for the Sacrament, *Eucharist*, denotes only this thanksgiving. The gifts which were offered in support

<sup>1</sup> *C. Tryph.* c. 117. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> IV. 17. 5. [H.]



of the *Agapé* by members of the congregation, and which also served for the support of the priests, were called sacrificial gifts as forming a part of the service of the sanctuary. But the conception of the Death of Christ as the great sacrificial Death for the salvation of the world conveyed also to the Eucharist, as soon as it was once conceived as a sacrificial meal, in a special degree the signification of a propitiatory sacrifice.

When the priesthood that came into existence recognized its type in the Old Testament, they were compelled, in order to complete this idea, to look round for a sacrifice to be offered, and, as though by pre-established harmony, there was found for that purpose the Lord's Supper, which in this sense was developed into the Sacrifice of the mass. Catholic theology in the interest of the priest inverted this historical order, teaching that the Sacrifice to be offered required a priesthood, and that Christ, with the institution of this Sacrifice to be henceforward offered, instituted the Apostles and their followers as priests.

The African bishop, Cyprian<sup>1</sup>, who united in his person the Old and New Testament points of view, a Catholic, but in his conflict with the Papacy and tradition a Protestant as well, feels himself already quite a sacrificial priest<sup>2</sup>: 'If Christ Himself is the high-priest and offered Himself as a Sacrifice to the Father, so a priestly office as representative of Christ is in truth exercised by him who imitates what Christ did, and offers in the Church a true and complete sacrifice to the Divine Father.' But side by side with this the notion held its ground that this sacrifice was, after all, only a *memorial celebration* of the Sacrifice once

<sup>1</sup> *Conc. Trid. Sessio XXII*, can. 2. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* 63. [H.]



perfected upon the Cross. 'Christians,' writes St. Augustine<sup>1</sup>, 'celebrate the *memorial* of the perfected Sacrifice by means of the most holy offering and the participation in the Body and Blood of Christ.' St. Chrysostom<sup>2</sup> says : 'It is not another sacrifice from that which the high-priest brought in those days, but the same that we bring at all times, or rather we effect thereby the *remembrance* of the Sacrifice.' In this vacillation between a present reality and the celebration of an event past yet holding good for ever, there came to be overlooked the defective character of the Eucharist, regarded as a sacrifice, in that it is not presented to the Deity by being partly destroyed, but strictly speaking is only shown to Him, for the mere fact of the priest's eating and drinking it in the instant of transition to becoming a Sacrament could not be regarded as such a destruction in the way in which we might speak jestingly of the destruction of wine or beer. In the case of the sacrificial feasts and priestly perquisites of the old world prescribed pieces of the animal sacrificed were committed to the flames to ascend as an agreeable odour, while the sacrificial company and the priests counted as guests of the gods.

The above incertitude runs through the whole of Catholic theology, with a strong inclination on the part of the Schoolmen to see in the Sacrifice of the mass only the representation (*repræsentatio*) and the memorial of the Sacrifice once made upon the Cross. Even in the resolutions of the Council of Trent<sup>3</sup>, however decided a stress is laid upon the mass as a true and peculiar sacrifice to be offered to God, this simple representation and the memorial of that which was

<sup>1</sup> *Contra Faustum Manich.* XX 18. [H.]      <sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Hebr. Hom.* 17. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *S. XXII, c. I.* [H.]



once offered, is a note that still sounds through it all, and Möhler's only device for demonstrating that it was a true sacrifice to be offered daily was that, laid again in Christ's own hand, it first of all consists in His 'descent in the Eucharist', as a necessary element in His collective merits in our behalf; and this in contradiction of the teaching of the Catholic Church, which does not assume a descent of Christ into the bread and wine, but a transformation of it into the Body and Blood of Him Who is unaffected by it.

Inasmuch as the original custom to communicate daily held its ground in some large churches where there were bishops, it might happen that communicants were not always to be found. We have information on this subject dating from the fifth century merely through the rhetorically framed lamentation in a sermon of St. Chrysostom<sup>1</sup>: 'In vain is the daily sacrifice; in vain have we stood at the altar: no one partakes.'

The custom of pagan Rome to offer sacrifice to the manes of the honoured dead passed over at an early date into the Church of the West. Tertullian<sup>2</sup> considers it to be the duty of a pious widow to pray for the soul of her husband, and to offer sacrifice on the anniversary of his death. This either took the form of a gift, as a rule provisions for the priest and for the *Agapé*, or, according to the ancient Roman custom, by means of libations at the graves of the dead who were held in honour, on which occasions those who supplied them along with their friends often themselves drank a goodly amount. St. Augustine<sup>3</sup> relates how his dear mother Monica, who had followed the son of her tears to Milan, there, according to the custom in Africa, desired to pour out pulse

<sup>1</sup> *Hom. III in Ep. ad Eph.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *De Monog.* c. 10. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> *Confess.* VI. 2. [H.]



(*puls*), bread, and wine upon the graves of the martyrs, but was prevented from doing so by a church official of St. Ambrose as being a proceeding which had there been abolished, and as resembling the pagan sacrifices to the dead. Nevertheless, in the time of St. Augustine there was to be found an ancestral custom, perhaps as a consequence of those sacrificial gifts to the priest, that on the occasion of a congregation's celebrating the Holy Communion mention was made in the prayer of their members who had died in the Lord, especially of their martyrs, and it was noted that the sacrifice was offered on their behalf also. As from this custom belief in Purgatory developed, so too did the mass for the deliverance of the dead from it. Gregory the Great, in immediate relation to this, drew up from pre-existent early Christian materials the Roman canon of the mass, and, as in his own dreams souls appeared who invoked his aid in this direction, he had no grounds for refusing belief to like narratives told by others. In one of the monasteries founded by him there was a dying monk, in whose bed some pieces of gold were found which he had retained for himself from medical practice. Gregory denied him all consolation; his own brother, a monk of the same monastery, must needs send him a message that all abhorred him. He had him buried in the dung-yard with the gold pieces, and called after him, 'Thy gold is thy destruction!' But then thirty masses were said for him, whereupon he appears to his brother and announces his deliverance from the fire. It is unimportant whether that was an actual dream or a pious fraud, so as to procure for the dead an honourable burial and a kindly recollection.

In the later mediaeval time the majority of masses



came to be *masses for the dead*, either in honour of saints or to deliver the dead from Purgatory. The next stage was that masses were bought in order to obtain the fulfilment of all sorts of very earthly desires. There were even more sordid cases than that of a troubadour, who bespoke seven masses in order to win the love of a married lady of rank, which had hitherto been denied him. In the case of such masses the presence of a congregation was meaningless. Moreover, those who happened to be present did not communicate, but the priest alone. Not unfrequently the sacred act was negligently performed as a lifeless piece of business. Luther had painful experience in Rome of the higgledy-piggledy way in which masses were said, as though they were the performance of a juggling trick, and how the priest from the neighbouring altar called to him: 'Make haste, make haste; dispatch our dear Lady's Son back home!' Moreover, the Pope's courtiers joked freely at table, and commended the words that some spoke over the host: 'Bread thou art, and bread wilt remain.' Further, there was a disgraceful traffic and a hawking of masses for sale on the part of roving priests and mendicant monks. Accordingly, more particularly in German countries on the eve of the Reformation, masses and indulgences were, with equal lack of conscience, put up to be bought as insurances against Purgatory. Both bore the name of Christ; yet they alike caused His Cross and the Father to be forgotten. Mass priests and dealers in indulgences are deemed sufficient, even though not absolutely to bring salvation, yet at all events, for those who can pay, to deprive of their terrors the intermediate torture, which is the sole thing to be dreaded by the orthodox sinner.



We must fix our view upon these terrors in order to explain the wrath which Luther poured out upon the 'hedge-masses', and in order to comprehend how the mass in the Lutheran Church was called the tail of the serpent which had begotten much noxious vermin<sup>1</sup>, and in the Reformed Church a denial of the sufferings of Christ. Even Möhler closes his glorification of the mass with the admission: 'Yet it must not be left out of account that the Reformers may also have been misled by numerous, and, in some respects, extremely scandalous, abuses, in particular by an unspiritual, unemotional, mechanical celebration and reception of the mysterious act. Besides this, through lack of historical education, the great antiquity and apostolic origin of the holy function was not known to them.' It is still unknown to us to this day. But where higher historical culture was lodged in the age of the Reformation, when there were such theologians as Melancthon, Calvin, Flacius, or as Esmer<sup>2</sup>, Eck<sup>3</sup>, Prierias<sup>4</sup>, it is perhaps best not to dispute.

The Council of Trent<sup>5</sup> admitted those abuses, inasmuch as they undertook the removal of them. But they guarded with their excommunication the sacrifice of masses for the benefit of the living and the dead, for sins, punishments, satisfactions, as well as for other needs of life<sup>6</sup>, and in admitting them they merely disclaimed the assertion that the Sacrifice on the Cross thereby suffered any disparagement<sup>7</sup>. They also

<sup>1</sup> *Art. Smalc.* II. 2. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Jerome Esmer attacked Luther, in particular for his translation of the Bible, publishing himself in 1527 (in which year he died) a version of the New Testament after the Vulgate.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. i. p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Sylvester Prierias in a dialogue published in 1517 maintained that more regard should be paid to the Church and the Pope than to Holy Scripture.

<sup>5</sup> *S. XXII. Decret. de observ. et vit.* [H.]

<sup>6</sup> *Ib.* can. 3. [H.]

<sup>7</sup> *Ib.* can. 4. [H.]



desired the faithful to be present and communicate, and thus that the Sacrifice of the mass should pass over into a Sacrament ; but, should this not always be the case, they approved nevertheless, and commended the mass in which the priest alone communicated, as that which is ever celebrated alike for all the faithful <sup>1</sup>. Bellarmine holds that it is of no consequence whether many or few or no one be present at the Sacrifice of the mass. When the reforming Council of Pistoia <sup>2</sup> declared a common participation to be a constituent element in the Sacrifice of the mass, without, however, desiring to condemn those masses in which the persons present did not communicate, since they nevertheless partook of the sacrifice spiritually, although less completely, Pius VI rejected this idea as false, erroneous, and savouring of heresy, so far as it indirectly excludes the solitary mass. Möhler <sup>3</sup> merely remarks in excuse for it: 'The misfortune that now the whole congregation no longer communicate every Sunday, as they did in the primitive Church, and that it is merely the priest alone who as a rule receives the Body of our Lord in the mass, is not to be imputed to the Church as a fault (for all the prayers in the sacred function presume an actual communion of the whole congregation), but to the lukewarmness of the majority of the faithful.'

The misfortune does not consist in the fact that the whole congregation does not receive the Lord's Supper every Sunday, which in fact has not been customary for more than a thousand years, and was only customary at the time when the Church, beneath the executioner's sword wielded by the State, still felt itself to be one great family: but, seeing that mass is said daily

<sup>1</sup> Ib. can. 6. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> In 1786.

<sup>3</sup> p. 312. [H.]



at so many altars, a communion of the congregation, or in fact even the presence of individual believers at each of these altars, is of course not to be expected. The Church, moreover, does not expect it, and is certainly not prepared for it. The demand on the part of a believer that the host should be administered to him would merely embarrass the officiating priest. After the middle of the eighteenth century the question was on one occasion raised in Italy, whether the priest who was celebrating a private mass was bound to communicate lay persons who demanded the Sacrament. Liturgies all presume communion. Bellarmine declared it to be a duty to bestow the Body of the Lord upon those prepared to receive it. Benedict XIV considered it to be in keeping with the institution and with Church order, yet counsels submission if a bishop holds it to be unsuitable at this or that altar. The Pope himself, if he celebrates mass on high festivals at the high altar of St. Peter's, in no case communicates the cardinals who are seated in a semicircle round him, but only himself and the two cardinals who are assisting him. In general, as the arbitrarily introduced festival of Corpus Christi Day far surpasses in its solemnization Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, i. e. the festival of the Sacrifice of the mass surpasses the anniversary of the Holy Communion and of the Sacrifice upon the Cross, it follows that the Communion has taken a place completely subordinate to the mass. How many imposing masses have I seen in the chief churches of Rome! But the *Lord's Supper* was hastily got through in a side chapel at an early hour of the morning. A priest broke the previously consecrated hosts, muttered a few prayers, and those kneeling around the altar were communicated.



In answer to the Protestant objection the significance of the Sacrifice of the mass and its relation to the great sacrificial Death upon the Cross, in accordance with a hint already given at Trent, is thus represented by more modern theology, viz. that the latter is the Sacrifice on behalf of the whole world, the objective fact, while the former is the personal appropriation, on the part of individuals, of all the blessings of the Death of Christ. Perrone maintains that the necessity of this instrumentality plainly follows from the teaching of Protestants themselves, for that they were agreed in teaching that in order to appropriate to oneself the merits of Christ faith was needful, and thus they acknowledge that the Sacrifice on the Cross is not adequate for our justification. If then the necessity of such means in no way derogates from the merits of Christ, it is in this respect all the same whether there be adopted one means according to the Protestant, or several according to the Catholic teaching. But if this reasoning does not convince us, he consoles himself with the reflection that it is labour in vain to ask after reasons from those who at their own will make themselves articles of faith.

Are we to call this Roman or Jesuit logic? There is certainly need of the open hand of faith which receives the blessings flowing from the Death as from the Life of Christ, and this even according to the Catholic teaching where it steps beyond the limits of the pure *opus operatum*. This is the subjective appropriation. It takes nothing from the full value of a gift that one who is thirsting for it receives it with open hand. On the other hand, the daily bloodless Sacrifice of the mass is itself something objective. To affirm its necessity is to assume that the Sacrifice upon the



Cross is not sufficient, but must be daily repeated, though in another form, and that form a bloodless one, in order to convey to us its blessings for our personal appropriation. But this can be done perfectly in the *Sacrament* of the Lord's Supper, and moreover in the manner in keeping with our nature, namely by the perception of sense; and much more in the personal spontaneity that lays hold of it than by means of the bare presence at, or absence from, the mass.

He who wishes to demonstrate the necessity of the Sacrifice of the mass must maintain that the wrath of God against sin, this righteousness which judges the world, can only be appeased by the daily miraculous offering of the God-Man. We may then think, as Gregory depicted it, that while the priest uplifts the host upon earth, Christ lies before the Divine Father in heaven, and points to the marks of His Wounds, while the heavenly hosts who join in the solemnity gaze astonished at the miracle of Divine love and justice: an imposing picture of the imagination, whose lines nevertheless when subjected to examination become somewhat blurred, when we think that daily at every hour this Sacrifice is being offered on thousands upon thousands of altars. What an idea of God follows from this need for a daily sacrifice, not indeed so base as that of the Olympian gods in the *Birds* of Aristophanes, but yet a God to be feared, not Him to Whom the Lord's Prayer is addressed! The painful character of the Sacrifice upon the Cross would come into bold relief, if we were thus in the most sober earnest to consider that it was merely the first, although indeed the foundation, act in an endless series of necessary repetitions.

In the most striking contrast with this are the mani-



fold temporal wishes, for the accomplishment of which masses are bespoken and held. An infinite amount according to the Catholic hypothesis is expended (viz. the Body and Blood of the God-Man Who died and now for ever lives), in order to obtain something small and transitory. This signification of the mass, as an offering of petitions for all aims of everyday life, borders closely on the sacrifices of paganism, only that they brought appropriate and often costly sacrifices to purchase the favour of the gods, whereas the Sacrifice of the mass, while boundless indeed in its idea, comes to be very easy in its carrying out.

The really subjective appropriation of the blessing which flows from the Cross is worthily conceived by the Catholic doctrine with regard to the Sacrament, and yet more decidedly with regard to the Sacrifice of the mass. In fact the worthiness of the recipient is almost too strongly emphasized against his helpless need. It is so human, even though one does not *say*, at any rate to *think*, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief.' The deep-toned words of the Apostle as to unworthy partaking to condemnation<sup>1</sup> are echoed too powerfully through the Church for Catholic theology to venture to advocate the *opus operatum* in this matter. Paschasius<sup>2</sup>, after the manner of St. Augustine, writes: 'We have to consider not how much is laid hold of with the teeth, but how much with faith and love.' The Council of Trent<sup>3</sup> teaches 'that this Sacrifice is truly propitiatory, and, if we come before God with sincere heart and rightful faith, with fear and reverence, contrite and penitent, we obtain mercy'. But when the party in the Gallican Church, which desired to base Catholicism again upon deep religious

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 27 ff.    <sup>2</sup> *De Corp. et Sang.* c. 17. 1. [H.]    <sup>3</sup> *S. XXII*, c. 2. [H.]



foundations in the sense of the Augustinian dogma, took up without reserve the custom of lightly and frequently partaking of the Holy Communion, with which, as a wholly external work, consciences satisfied themselves in the midst of the most frivolous pursuits of the world, the Papacy put forth all its strength to suppress this serious moral lapse. So far apart from their doctrine does their practice lie.

Bellarmino<sup>1</sup> expressly distinguishes the Sacrifice of the mass from the Sacrament, in that the former does not have its effect as an *opus operatum* as the latter does, that it does not have any actual effect, and does not directly justify, but obtains from God the gift of penitence by means of which the sinner desires to approach the Sacrament and is thereby justified. Möhler<sup>2</sup> draws an ideal sketch of the mass, saying that there the assembled congregation relinquishes itself in order to surrender itself unconditionally to God in Christ; that finding in itself nothing worthy of the Deity, it gives back Him Who became the Sacrifice for the world; that its thought is: 'We possess nothing else that we could present but Him. Graciously accept our Sacrifice.'

We agree unreservedly with this, which is merely with the alteration of a few words the actual Protestant teaching of the faith that embraces salvation, and offers to the Deity the heart filled with Christ, as the sole permissible Sacrifice in the sphere of matured religion. Moreover, the elements of the mass, put together with careful thought, contain a rich store of Christian sentiments; only as a rule the lay person perceives nothing of it but the bell which is the signal for crossing himself. And of what

<sup>1</sup> *De Missa*, II. 4. 6. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> pp. 263 f.



avail then is the Sacrifice of the mass for all sorts of very mundane desires, while it is not unfrequently said on behalf of the person who bespeaks it or of his friends without their even knowing the day and hour? Above all, of what avail is the mass for departed souls? Here in fact the *opus operatum* meets us again in its naked and undeniable form. As far as the mind of the Church is concerned, it takes place as a work done by the priest. The layman has nothing to do with it, except that he orders it and pays. It shortens the punishment due, and helps forward the salvation of a soul which knows, and can know, nothing about it. It exercises magical powers without any interposition of a moral character.

Catholic theology sought to evade the difficulty by saying that this effect as exercised upon Purgatory is not altogether a certainty, but merely an assistance by means of intercession. If at any rate this uncertainty be plainly declared, simple piety will soon cease to bespeak masses for souls. But if you do not wish to confess to the *opus operatum* in an undisguised sense, you must also grant that the masses for the dead can help them no more than any pious prayer on their behalf, which, uncertain in its operation and relying upon God for its effect, is only an expression of affectionate fellowship with them, which even death could not sever. In this sense the early Catholic Church remembered their dead in the Holy Communion.

Accordingly it remains to the Sacrifice of the mass to be nothing more than what is half admitted, half denied, a visible memorial of the Sacrifice upon the Cross. But considered purely as such the mass might almost be outdone by the Passion play, which the



peasants of Oberammergau<sup>1</sup> produce every ten years, and repeat throughout the summer. And observe that this is not said in disparagement of the mass, for that Passion play too, almost the last tree to put forth fresh shoots out of a forest which in the Middle Ages was rich in bloom, came into existence as the result of a vow, and is held as a religious service. In the summer of 1860 in company with thousands, Catholics and Protestants, highly educated and simple country folk, along with their wives and children, we enjoyed it and were edified. But the benefit which the mass confers through bread and wine with its mysterious relation to the Body and Blood of our Lord, viz. that it is the solemn memorial of His Death, belongs to the Lord's Supper as a Sacrament; and it is only by harking back to this, as the evangelical celebration of the Holy Communion arose out of the mass, and as some pious theologians, feeling themselves no longer bound by Romish considerations, sought thus to hark back, that it will again be able to boast of being an Institution of Christ.

### C. The Cup.

Contrary to this Institution the Catholic Church has withdrawn the Cup from the congregation. The subterfuge that comes first to hand, that Christ administered it to the Apostles inasmuch as He was thereby setting them apart as priests, is, for those that have any reverence for tradition, absolutely precluded by the fact that the Church in the first millennium of her existence uniformly offered the Cup to all. Not

<sup>1</sup> In upper Bavaria. The play has been, with slight exceptions, performed every ten years since its institution, in fulfilment of a vow to that effect with a view to deliverance from a pestilence which there, as in many other villages, followed upon the ravages of the Thirty Years' War.



that uneasiness was felt, if on any occasion one of the elements of the Lord's Supper was not available, or if communion was prevented by sickness. We know that in the first century, when Christians liked best only to eat the Bread belonging to their Lord, and the very petition for 'daily bread' in the Lord's Prayer was referred to this, many took the consecrated bread home with them from the celebration of the Holy Communion, in order to eat some of it each morning fasting. In the same way, on the other hand, long afterwards on shipboard, on account of the swaying motion, the Sacrifice of the mass was carried out with the host alone as a dry mass (*missa sicca*). But the Cup was so universal and valid for the laity that we still possess two Roman decrees dating from the fifth century, in which to turn away from the Cup is designated as heretical. Gelasius I<sup>1</sup> ordained thus: 'We learn that some, taking only their share of the sacred Body, hold back from the Cup of the sacred Blood. These persons, since they are swayed by some superstition, I know not what, must in any case receive the complete Sacrament, or be altogether excluded from it, since a severance of that holy thing, which is one and the same, cannot take place without a great sacrilege (*sacrilegium*).' This decree, incorporated into the Church's voluminous Canon Law, received in Roman editions the heading: 'The *priest* must not take the Body of the Lord without His Blood.' But it is not the priest who is spoken of there, but, as is clear from the earlier pronouncement of Leo the Great, heretics of the Manichaean sect<sup>2</sup>, who certainly had no hesitation with regard to the consecrated bread, but may have had such with regard

<sup>1</sup> See p. 219.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 124.



to the wine. Perrone<sup>1</sup> attempts another mode of escape. He says that those heretics could not have so long remained concealed in Rome unless Communion through bread alone had been permitted, and that it is only against the heretics that the Pope is pressing the undivided participation, and by no means intends his words to apply to all lay persons. But in a large city in administering the Sacrament at two different sides of the altar, or when it was still carried round by the deacons, it is quite easy to suppose that, so long as no note was made of it, some remained unobserved, who avoided drinking of the Cup, while both the utterances from Rome assume the custom of the Church of that time as a universal one, and absolutely reject the intentional severance of the Sacrament. Nevertheless it was only in Rome that they ventured at that time to disallow this. Not till the twelfth century, through the fear of possible spilling of the Divine Blood, was the Cup here and there taken from the laity. Thomas Aquinas still considers the withholding of the Cup as usual only in certain churches, and justifies it by 'Concomitance', i. e. from the quality possessed by flesh of not being bloodless<sup>2</sup>. The Council of Constance, withstanding the pressure of the Hussites, was the first to raise this withdrawal to be a law of the Church, although admitting the ancient custom. The Council of Basel conceded to the Hussites the Cup, which was their standard, with the comment that the Church was justified on good grounds in withholding it from the laity, but also on grounds submitted for its consideration it could permit it. The Council of Trent<sup>3</sup> restricted the Cup to the priest who was saying mass, but with the somewhat limited

<sup>1</sup> Tom. VIII, pp. 192, 211. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> P. III, Qu. 76, Art. 2;

ib. Qu. 80, Art. 12. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> S. XXI, cc. 2, 3. [H.]



admission that in the early days of the Christian religion the Cup was *not unusually* given to the laity, but that for weighty reasons communion by means of the host alone had become the law. Side by side with this it left the Pope free to concede the Cup to the Protestants on good grounds. This took place for some German provinces, but since it did not lead to submission, the permission was soon recalled.

As regards the weighty grounds for the withdrawal, since the Fathers at Trent observed a wise silence upon the point, Perrone informs us: 'The Church, as the Mother given us by God, is not bound to render account to her children why she has upon this or that ground adopted her decisions. Although therefore she has not disclosed the grounds which determined her to put forth such a law, yet it is to be considered as certain that they have been of the utmost weight.' Nevertheless he has taken the trouble to collect from the proceedings at Trent the following reasons: (1) the risk of spilling the Blood, especially in case of a large number of people; (2) the aversion of many to touching with their lips the common Cup; (3) the difficulty of reserving the consecrated wine for the sick, especially in regions of extreme heat or cold; (4) the lack of wine in many places; (5) the natural dislike of many men for wine; (6) the voluntary disuse of the Cup on the part of the faithful in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; (7) the shamelessness of heretics, who do not shrink from reproaching the Church with ignorance or contempt of the Ordinance of Christ.

The first reason certainly does involve a motive for withholding the Cup. The last is an acknowledgment of that embarrassed obstinacy which has led



many a government to refuse as long as possible a recognized claim, because the demand for it is made in conjunction with the reproach that it ought never to have been refused. The other reasons could only serve to lay down cases of exception, not a rule. But the true ground, on account of which the Roman Church clings so stubbornly to withholding it, is passed over in silence by the Roman theologian: the glorification of the priesthood as alone fully entitled to a place at the Lord's Table. Therefore too in some countries it became a custom that the king on the occasion of his coronation receives the Cup, or through the special favour of the Pope by way of a last cordial of refreshment. Schiller has made use of this in an affecting scene of his *Maria Stuart*, though not adapted for representation in a theatre. The Sacrament of Coronation is held worthy of sharing *for once* in that of which the priest partakes daily. It has undoubtedly been the cause of superstitious scruples; but it is the fashion of the hierarchy to lay hold with the wisdom of the serpent upon directions given them with the simplicity of the dove, and thus to carry out our Lord's words<sup>1</sup>, only separating them under different heads.

Möhler boasts with regard to withholding of the Cup that the Catholic shows in this detail of ceremonial 'that he has no anxiety as to the form, while he abstains from the consecrated Cup, and, instructed by Biblical precedents and in any case by the authority of the primitive Church, believes that he can abstain'. So much the more is it for the Catholic Church to deal with this detail. Notwithstanding Möhler was prepared to rejoice, 'if it were left optional to each

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 16.



person whether he desired to drink of the consecrated Cup or not; a thing which may even be confidently expected to take place, if the universal desire, set forth in a spirit of love and concord, shall express itself as strongly for partaking as in the twelfth century it expressed itself against it.'<sup>1</sup> There we are listening once again to the earlier Möhler, as I knew him in his joyous and hopeful youth. But the wish simply cannot be expressed in a spirit of love and concord, inasmuch as every such desire is considered as the raising of a banner of insurrection, and that joy that Möhler desired could only be ignored in consideration of his merits in other respects. Moreover, it is the priests alone who have spoken against administering the Cup to the laity; the laity have endured it as though in a state of pupillage. In fact they have long been deceived with respect to their privation, inasmuch as the custom held for a long time, and still exists in some dioceses, to give the communicants the Cup indeed, but with unconsecrated wine, as it is commonly said, to wash down the host. Has Möhler also forgotten to adduce the 'Biblical precedents', and, under the authorities of the primitive Church, perhaps the *dicta* of those two bishops of Rome? For the withdrawal of the Cup we have searched in vain. Its justification by the doctrine of 'Concomitance' assumes a very material view of the glorified Body of the God-Man. It is true that Shylock was unable to cut off a pound of flesh from the body of the merchant of Venice without blood also being shed on the occasion. But our Lord thought fit to divide His Body and His Blood, while He ordained for each a special symbol.

The Council of Trent<sup>2</sup> maintained that the institution

<sup>1</sup> Rp. 320 ff. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> S. XXI, c. 1. [H.]



of the Holy Communion did not amount to this, that all the faithful should receive it in both kinds. This they ventured to maintain in the face of our Lord's words: 'Drink *ye all* of this.' To meet this objection Romish theology discovered a droll expedient, saying that this direction only had to do with the Apostles present, in order that one might not empty the Cup! The Council of Trent moreover pronounces an anathema upon those who considered the Cup necessary for salvation. This curse on the part of the Church which administers blessing we need not take to ourselves. There is no question here of eternal salvation, which is neither eaten nor drunk. This was only thrown out in the heat of the controversy; but the point is this, that the Roman Church has mutilated the most holy Meal instituted by Christ for the congregation, and from self-interested grounds still abides by this mutilation in the face of better knowledge.

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In this way while the fullness of religious life with all its blessings that Christ bequeathed to us has, it is true, by no means disappeared in the Catholic celebration, yet it is borne down by grievous abuses and errors. When after the disputation at Berne<sup>1</sup> Zwingli mounted the pulpit, a priest just then desired to say mass at a side-altar. He listened to the sermon which set forth the nullity of the Sacrifice of the mass. At the close the priest threw off his sacramental vesture with the exclamation: 'If this be the case with the mass, I cannot celebrate it either now or ever again.' These errors and abuses might be set forth in language much more keen: the Roman Church nevertheless

<sup>1</sup> In 1524.



would not cast away her sacrificial vesture, since Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the mass, and the withholding of the Cup, are all profoundly linked with her essential character; and first of all with her tendency to present the Deity in a shape of which the senses take cognizance, a thing which reaches its climax in the mass. Accordingly with due regard for the public benefit the Corpus Christi feast became the great feast for Catholicism, on which it shows itself in its highest pomp, and draws into its triumphal train so far as is possible all earthly glory. Thus then, if the symbolic character of the Sacrament, as a symbol full of meaning (just as the water of Baptism has thus remained unaltered amid all the belief in marvels), and pointing to something higher and eternal, perishes through belief in the transformation of substances, yet this leading feature of Catholicism has decked itself out in this way so as to substitute for ideas something tangible, however fictitious. Lastly, there is the consequent glory of the priesthood, who, not without justification in accordance with the dogma, ever bear in their hearts bold thoughts concerning the created being who in the mass makes his Creator. Therefore no Catholic priest, before the last one that remains, will say the last mass, the mass for the dead Papacy.



## CHAPTER VIII

### MARRIAGE

THE controversy between the Churches does not require a controversial view as to the significance of marriage on the side of nature, justice, historical development, and religion. It comes into prominence in its Catholic enforcement as a *Sacrament*, and as *indissoluble*, in the treatment of *hindrances to marriage* and of *mixed* marriages.

It is true that Catholic theologians cast up against the Reformers approval of polygamy on account of the decision which permitted the Landgrave of Hesse<sup>1</sup>, in the lifetime of his consort, who had become repugnant to him, to marry a young lady of noble birth. The Landgrave, who had the desire, not the courage, to sin, urged this concession, which was considered to remove to itself the responsibility of the sin, and boasted that he could easily obtain a dispensation of the kind from the Pope, just as Clement VII had offered it to Henry VIII. This, as the less evil of the two, was granted at Wittenberg in the shape of counsel connected with confession, after a serious exhortation to abstain from his sinful desire. It was a time when decisions, which for a thousand years had been held to

<sup>1</sup> Philip of Hesse, husband of Christina, daughter of Duke George of Saxony, desired to marry Margaret von der Saale, one of his sister's lady's-maids, and sent Bucer to Wittenberg in 1539 to obtain the advice of Luther and Melancthon. The alternative was continued adultery, or an honourable (?) married life with a second spouse taken with the consent of the first. Luther and Melancthon gave as confidential counsel that the marriage should be carried out, but privately. After much excitement and trouble the emperor in 1541 granted Philip an indemnity.



be binding as Divine laws, were regarded as erroneous and overturned. The contemporaneous wives of patriarchs and other friends of God in the Old Testament appeared not to confirm monogamy as a Divine law, although Paradise proclaims it as a Divine fact. An ecclesiastical sanction seemed to be given in the story of the two wives of Count Gleichen, the aged German housewife and the blooming flower from the East, the Sultan's daughter. Gregory IX, moved by her beauty, when on the occasion of her Baptism she threw back her veil, and by her love, for she went all lengths, was said to have granted a dispensation for her marriage. The historical learning, it is true, of the Roman theologian cast up this story of the Crusades to *Protestantism* as a reproach!

Luther and Melancthon bitterly regretted the above decision. Protestantism has no concern with it. Moreover, the wives of the Mormons, which Perrone seeks to saddle upon the Protestant Church, no more involve it in guilt than do the sects which, after the *Agapé*, extinguished the lights in the Catholic Church. In fact, there was a desire to assign to one or the other Church as sects, in accordance with a characteristic stamp, those 'Progressives' who carry on their business with equal confidence among Protestants and Catholics. Their insipid Mormon book, which they place on a level with and above Holy Scripture, is nothing but a dead tradition reduced to writing. It is self-evident that only the marriage of *one* woman with *one* man corresponds to the Christian and to every refined conception of morality. The only point upon which a doubt can arise is whether, on the conversion of savage peoples, the immediate divorce of the extra wives must be carried out, as this presents great



difficulties to the acceptance of Christianity, especially in the case of the chieftains. The Jesuit Mission, in keeping with its well-known method of accommodation, would venture to take a more liberal line in the matter than our rigorous missionaries.

### A. As a Sacrament.

According to the Tridentine decision<sup>1</sup> marriage was ordained as a Sacrament by Christ, a chosen vessel of God's favour. This has its Scriptural basis in our Lord's words: 'So that they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder';<sup>2</sup> and in the saying of the Apostle, who in exhorting men to love their wives faithfully, thinking of the same marriage blessing as bestowed in Paradise, adds: 'This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the Church.'<sup>3</sup> Besides, appeal is made to the marriage at Cana. There Christ is said to have bestowed His blessing upon the first Christian marriage.

It is a strange idea that Christ ordained something which existed from the very beginning, and undoubtedly still stranger, what is presumably the opposite opinion, that marriage was invented by men in the Church. Later theology expresses more clearly what is intended, viz. that Christ raised marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament. But His expression is directed against the readiness of its dissolution according to Jewish law, and merely repeats the assertion that marriage was ordained of God from the very beginning through the Creation and in nature itself. The saying of St. Paul has only been adduced in support, because the Greek word denoting mystery

<sup>1</sup> *S. XXIV, de Sacram. Matr. can. 1.* [H.]    <sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 6.    <sup>3</sup> Eph. v. 32.



is rendered in the Latin Bible by *Sacramentum*. But this does not mean Sacrament in the ecclesiastical sense, but it is a mysterious sense of making into one which St. Paul finds in that word of great antiquity, that is to say, a prophecy concerning the relation of Christ to the Church ; and herein lies undoubtedly a recognition of the dignity of marriage, as being a type of the highest religious fellowship. Lastly, it was simply as a guest that Christ was invited to the marriage at Cana. He brought with Him the blessing of His presence as well, but His coming and His miracle only bear witness to the fact that marriage itself and its festivity are not unworthy of the participation of a man of serious temper and with thoughts directed to the highest aims. Moreover, He also accepted the invitation to the inhospitable entertainment of a Pharisee<sup>1</sup>. We gather absolutely nothing of a special grace bestowed by Christ, of a supernatural grace of God exclusively attached to the Sacraments, and specially moulded anew for each of the sacred seven. Certainly a happy marriage, where each partner is the complement and inspiration of the other, is a great result of the grace of God, but merely in a natural way, as like blessings are bestowed upon other bonds of family or friendship. Side by side with these there are not wanting marriages by means of which notably the woman pines away, is morally lowered, is ruined.

The Council of Trent, taking this perhaps into consideration, contented itself with speaking only of a *suggestion* on the part of St. Paul, while later theology has extended it into an absolute Scriptural basis, and in harmony with Trent<sup>2</sup> has made the further proof to lie in the uniform *tradition* of the universal Church.

<sup>1</sup> Luke vii. 36 ff.

<sup>2</sup> S. XXIV. [H.]



No later than in *Tertullian*<sup>1</sup> we find set forth, in terms of a lofty and exclusively religious idealism, the Christian consecration and significance of marriage. Moreover, it was already at that date customary to announce a contract of marriage to the congregation, which certainly did not take place without being accompanied by the blessing of a pious wish; nay, in a *letter of St. Ignatius*<sup>2</sup> every marriage was bound to be concluded according to the judgement of the bishop with reference to God, and not to gratify sensual cravings.

As a condition fraught with blessing and to be deemed holy, and at the prompting of St. Paul's language with reference to it, the Church Fathers go so far as to term marriage a Sacrament in the well-known wider sense, Old Testament marriages inclusive. But even after the number seven had established itself, there runs through the Schoolmen a doubt whether a sacramental grace is actually conferred by marriage, or whether it was only ordained as an aid against sin. In this doubt, although it imperils the Catholic conception of the Sacrament, and therefore even Durandus<sup>3</sup> desired that marriage should not be reckoned as such, there is simply the echo of the Church's disparagement of the natural relation of the sexes, according to which, if marriage counts as a Sacrament, it follows that virginity, or the vow of chastity, ought still more to be deemed such. According to Roman law, marriage in its different grades was concluded only by means of mutual declaration of assent; according to old German law, by means of the delivery of the bride into the custody of the man's family. When the Roman legal

<sup>1</sup> *Libri ad uxorem, et id. de Pudic. c. 4.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> *Ep. ad Polyc. c. 5.* [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Gulielmus Durandus, prelate and jurist, died at Rome in 1296.



form passed into the Canon law, the Church's blessing, down to the resolution at Trent, had merely a religious significance.

In the character of a Sacrament, marriage, according to the ancient traditional view, completely lacks everything symbolic. To the school question as to matter and form, the usual answer is as follows: It is carried into effect by the betrothed themselves through their declaration of the intention of belonging to one another in wedlock. According to this, it might happen that young persons without the privity of their parents might perhaps, in the course of a dance, by means of a simple question and affirmative answer, conclude a valid marriage. These clandestine or unceremonious marriages, so easily and thoughtlessly concluded, and yet fraught with incalculable results which no repentance can obliterate, necessarily brought bitter misery upon numerous families. Luther poured out his wrath against them. Trent<sup>1</sup> also declared them null and void. Nevertheless, for the conclusion of the marriage all that was wanted was the *presence* of the clergyman as a qualified witness, with at least two other witnesses, at the declaration of consent on the part of the betrothed. It was principally Melchior Canus<sup>2</sup> who laid stress upon the opposite opinion that only the priest should carry out the Sacrament. However strong the support from the Catholic point of view for the necessity of the priest's benediction, nevertheless the ancient traditional view was retained and was indirectly confirmed by decrees of later Popes, that by means of the declaration of consent on the

<sup>1</sup> S. XXIV. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> A Spanish Dominican who died 1550. His great work is *Loci Theologici*, learned investigations as to the sources, principles, method, and fundamental ideas of dogmatics.



part of the betrothed in presence of the clergyman, even where he is obliged to abstain from every prayer and every token of approval (*assistentia privata*), a marriage, however irregular, still undoubtedly valid takes place, and thus the Sacrament is carried out.

This spontaneous setting aside of the power of the priest's utterances on the occasion of a proceeding of such decisive influence upon all social relationships, and in which man is so inclined to entreat the blessing of a supreme power upon his hidden future, could only be explained by the Catholic Church's sentiment, gradually obscured yet ineradicable, that marriage was not a supremely holy action, and thus not in its origin a Sacrament. The early Church had a dread of its natural side, which indeed is reckoned by the Church to belong not to its completion, but to its consummation. For this reason ancient writings, after the type of Tobias, set forth the duty of postponement of this natural consummation as though from reverence towards the Church's blessing<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, until far into mediaeval times, this blessing was as a rule carried out in front of the Church door.

But the Catholic Church has a special interest in the sacramental character of marriage, as upon this she bases her claim to take judicial cognizance of all marriage litigation<sup>2</sup>, which, however, as concerning the civil relations of marriage, the modern State has for the most part taken in hand. In German countries the Austrian Concordat<sup>3</sup> had merely temporarily restored such cases to the episcopal courts.

With regard to Protestant marriages one Catholic

<sup>1</sup> *Conc. Carthag. IV. can. 13.* [H.]    <sup>2</sup> *Conc. Trid. S. XXIV, can. 12.* [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Concluded at Vienna in 1855 between Francis Joseph of Austria and Pius IX; annulled in 1870.



opinion is that as not being concluded according to the form appointed at Trent, they are merely cases of concubinage, and that therefore on any secessions that occur to the Catholic Church they must first be legitimized by a corrective dispensation. According to the other opinion, so far as the decree of Trent has not been published, or at all events never accepted in Protestant communities, and moreover in pursuance of the analogy of Protestant Baptism, the marriages are considered to be valid, and consequently their carrying out to be a Sacrament. Therefore also on occasion occurring they are dealt with, if the requisite power be forthcoming, before Catholic marriage courts and in accordance with the principles of Canon law. Both views can appeal to a papal resolution. The former, however, is now pretty well given up, and only retained by Protestants as a reproach for purposes of exciting odium. The other is taken for granted in the later papal decrees on mixed marriages.

Protestantism has, it is true, given up the Sacramental character of marriage<sup>1</sup>, while recognizing it as a primitive Divine ordinance, as a parable of the union of Christ with His Church, thus newly consecrated, restored through the Church's benediction to the innocence of Paradise, completely on a level in dignity with the virgin state, the natural and moral basis of the Church as well as of the State. The Protestant Church lays special weight upon the *nuptial ceremony*, which has its origin in the Church's blessing, and perhaps with the exception of the Scotch Church, which did not unreservedly recognize the marriages made in former days in the smithy of Gretna Green, Protestant sentiment would not regard, in spite of civil validity, a

<sup>1</sup> *Apol. Conf.* VII. p. 202. [H.]



marriage only concluded according to the law of the State as an honourable Christian marriage.

### B. Divorce.

According to the decision at Trent every marriage canonically celebrated is *indissoluble*. It is only the marriage which has indeed been concluded, but not yet consummated, which can be cancelled by the monastic vow of one of the parties. Some other reasons for separation effect merely severance from bed and board without dissolution of the marriage tie. Still more is account taken of human deficiencies by means of a declaration of nullity, a legal fiction to the effect that, although a marriage has actually taken place, nevertheless it has never legally done so, as having been entered upon under conditions which according to Canon law forbid marriage.

When Luther threw into the fire with the code of Canon law the Catholic marriage law as well, Protestantism at once recognized valid grounds for divorce. According to a stricter method of procedure these were confined to the two so-called Scriptural ones, adultery and criminal desertion, or merely the first of these; according to one less strict, ill-treatment also, a shameful occupation, disgraceful punishments, and the like; with the proviso that after a divorce had been obtained a fresh marriage could not be forbidden to the innocent party, which then, owing to the difficulty of accurately apportioning the guilt, was not unfrequently conceded also to the other party.

The indissolubility of marriage has perhaps at all times floated before the mind of the Catholic Church, even in the case of death. The rigid custom of the Church of the martyrs even disliked a second mar-



riage after the death of the former spouse. This was a natural conclusion, just as in India, where, however, it is connected with the unjust servitude of the wife, it led to the burning of the widow. But the Church was for a long time far from actually prohibiting second marriage. St. Jerome excuses his friend Fabiola, who had deserted her husband on account of his disgraceful habits, and contracted a marriage elsewhere: 'She was young, and had not the power to guard her widowhood. She deemed it better openly to admit her weakness and betake herself to the protection of an unfortunate marriage, than shielded by the reputation of being but once married (*univira*) to surrender herself to secret licentiousness.' But later she placed herself among the penitents and became a saint<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, after the facility with which Jewish and Roman letters of divorce could be obtained was vanquished by the seriousness of the Church's morals, while yet the imperial laws at once Roman and Christian permitted remarriage in the case of the innocent party to the divorce, several Church Fathers and National Councils, and the ancient Roman *Penitential* itself, permit this after divorce on account of adultery, and forbid it only to the guilty party. This has remained the law also in the Eastern Church. Still less was the Church's ideal to be permanently maintained against the free German right of man, however closely it corresponded with the still unbroken German morality, such as the noble Roman formerly held up before his people<sup>2</sup>. But Frankish kings had almost as many concubines as David and Solomon, and the Church tolerated it. A Frankish law, dictated by temporal and spiritual vassals of the

<sup>1</sup> *Ep.* 84. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Tacitus, *Germania*, c. 19. [H.]



throne, permits a husband who is obliged to flee from a province without his wife's desiring to follow him, to marry again. Gregory II pronounced the bad health of the woman to be sufficient excuse for the divorce and remarriage of the man. Throughout the whole of the Middle Ages numerous couples bound by love or by law were separated on the score of nullity, for owing to the way in which degrees of relationship even to the remotest branches were considered as excluding marriage, it was seldom difficult to discover some sort of relationship, or to cause it to be discovered by means of a fictitious genealogy. Plenty of other grounds of nullity also are available. If Clement VII refused to annul the marriage of Henry VIII and thereby lost England, he did not for a moment allege the impossibility of such a separation, but only postponed it, never quite giving up hopes that it might be possible to annoy Charles V by a decision which thrust his dear aunt<sup>1</sup> from the throne.

In particular up to the time of the Council of Trent it was held to be a moot point whether breach of chastity on the part of the woman constituted a ground for a perfectly valid divorce. Erasmus demonstrated on Scriptural grounds that marriage was broken by adultery. If the Roman theology of the time calls him in regard to that statement a grammarian, not a theologian, nevertheless the Popes of his period held him in high repute as the leader of theological culture of the day, who had been the first to bring again Holy Scripture and the Fathers within the reach of the Church. Cardinal Cajetan<sup>2</sup> based

<sup>1</sup> Charles was son of Joanna, who was daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, and thus sister to Catharine of Aragon, Henry VIII's first wife.

<sup>2</sup> *Comm. in Matt.* 19. [H.] See vol. i. p. 271.



this view upon the words of Christ, while he held that the Church had not yet promulgated a decision. Since Trent this judgement has ceased to be open. Nevertheless some learned men in the Gallican Church have claimed a right to exercise it. Moreover the Popes found means, without surrender of the principle, to dissolve several marriages where special political interests were involved, while some sort of reason for nullifying the marriage contract was sought out.

*Theology* seeks to demonstrate the indissolubility of marriage from its essential nature as a Sacrament. To aver this as a proof involves simply the admission that it cannot be proved from the nature of marriage. What is marriage? A contract between two persons of different sexes to devote themselves to each other, body and soul, for life. Christian marriage comes into existence through blessing, consecration, or at any rate recognition of this contract on the part of the Church. As a contract, if antecedent suppositions were afterwards perceived to be erroneous, marriage could be dissolved by mutual agreement, or be annulled on either side on account of offences committed against its essence. On the other hand, the mysterious spell of a Sacrament is supposed to effect the indissoluble character. But this feature is not contained in the conception of a Sacrament, inasmuch as every Sacrament does not effect a charter incapable of being erased, and thus it is not apparent why the sacramental act should not be cancelled on account of human failings, and through Divine grace renewed with another person; for it should be noted that the Catholic Church, bound by its past, attaches no weight to any magical element in the words of the priest in concluding a marriage.



But its indissoluble character is also based upon the words of our Lord Himself: 'Moses for your hardness of heart suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it hath not been so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her when she is put away committeth adultery. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.'<sup>1</sup>

Catholic theology has sought out various contrivances for evading the exception here set down, in which divorce is thus permitted. It has been explained 'on account of the infidelity itself', but in that case the clause must have read otherwise. Or that merely divorce from bed and board should result from unfaithfulness. But this semi-divorce was unknown to the Jewish law and the Church of the Apostles. If it was desired to find in it as a matter of fact that the dismissed wife is not justified in forming a fresh marriage, and that she cannot acquire this justification even by her adultery, there still remains to be dealt with the innocent party, husband or wife, and on this the question turns. Christ, by means of the excepting clause in the law, justifies such persons in seeking a divorce. He does not exclude them, and no legitimate ground is conceivable for excluding them, from a fresh union. The Church as represented at Trent thus causes that significant saying of Christ to have been spoken in vain. What Christ left open, it has barred. It places the husband, who is unfortunate enough to have been deceived by an adulterous wife, in a position of permanent isolation; deceived as well upon a matter which no law, natural, civil, or Christian,

<sup>1</sup> See Matt. xix. 3-12, cp. v. 32, also Mark x. 2-12 and Luke xvi. 18.



denies to him: and in the converse case the same happens to the innocent, unfortunate wife.

The Catholic decision finds an easier part to play when it comes to deal, secondly, with the declaration of the Apostle. After St. Paul has recognized the religious admissibility and significance of the marriage union of a Christian and a non-Christian, he declares: 'Yet if the unbelieving departeth, let him depart: the brother or the sister (the Christian partner) is not under bondage in such cases.'<sup>1</sup> This involves the dissolution of the marriage, and, in the fact of being no longer bound, freedom for a fresh union; for the converse, the bound condition would have consisted in the fact that the Christian partner, although deserted, and, according to the law of those days, without any means of bringing back the one who had separated, was obliged nevertheless still to acknowledge the claims of this marriage. In this sense also Catholic theology understood it, but by way of harmonizing it with usage modified its meaning thus, that if in the case of a non-Christian pair one partner becomes a Christian, the marriage is hereby and, by means of the voluntary act on the one side, *ipso facto* completely dissolved. Marriage external to Christianity, although it as well is of Divine appointment, is thus treated as of no account, and bitter injustice is audaciously practised in the name of Christianity. It happened in a Popish town not long after the Mortara case<sup>2</sup> that a merchant's clerk, a Christian, seduced the wife in a Jewish house. She fled with him, accompanied by her children, to Bologna, and there obtained Baptism along with them. In vain did the Jew demand back his wife and children. The cardinal legate himself

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 83.



united this worthy Christian in wedlock to him who had seduced and converted her, but the Jew was charged with providing for the support of this Christian family by means of a suitable annual allowance. This is an example of the Pope's justice.

The Apostle rather urged the Christian partner to continue to live with the unbelieving one so long as the latter consented. Protestant usage extended the Apostle's exception in another direction, so as to be a reason for divorce in the case of criminal desertion, which then often took place on the ultimate mutual understanding of a desire for desertion, and of making a judicial plaint on that ground. But even the case adduced by the Apostle himself appears, as of inherent right, to range itself alongside of the sole justification for severance laid down by Christ, 'saving for the cause of fornication,'<sup>1</sup> and the legislation of Protestant States has added several other grounds for divorce besides. In this way both Churches have deviated from the letter of Holy Scripture. After reformed Protestantism had permitted itself to pass step by step very freely beyond the grounds given in the Bible for divorce, there not long ago appeared suddenly a reaction in Church politics, affecting especially a portion of the Prussian clergy. This affirmed that a return must be made to the two Scriptural grounds, or merely the one Scriptural ground, for divorce, and that to every one who, in accordance with State law, was divorced on other grounds, blessing on a fresh marriage should be refused.

Marriage in its idea is indissoluble. It would be a Sacrament of adultery to any one entering upon it with the thought of undoing it again if occasion served.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 32.



Though it be true what is related of the Polish aristocracy of former days, that there it was not unusual for the bride to cause herself to be given a box on the ear in the presence of witnesses, in order, if occasion should require it, to base upon this a proof of the nullity of the marriage, as having been brought about by forceable means, such a marriage would even among Catholics be considered no Sacrament, but a sacrilege. It is plain that a high-minded wife can only give herself to a husband wholly, unreservedly, and for ever. This is the view that Christ pronounced twice in opposition to Jewish decisions. The one occasion was in that august collection of thoughts connected with the kingdom of God which we call the Sermon on the Mount; thoughts which indicate humanity's highest aims, but which in their shape of illustrations of a proverbial or parabolic character are not calculated to become without qualification laws for actual life. Christ compared him who hateth his brother to a murderer<sup>1</sup>. Are our laws in such a case bound to inflict the death penalty if any one is convicted of hating his brother man? His direction is: if a member incite you to sin, pluck it out, cut it off, and cast it from thee<sup>2</sup>. It rests as a dark shadow upon the life of an illustrious church teacher<sup>3</sup> that he acted accordingly, just as various gloomy enthusiasts in the steppes of Russia do at this day. Christ's direction also was: 'Whosoever smiteth thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.'<sup>4</sup> But when He was Himself struck, He did not offer the other cheek, but defended Himself with the dignity of a man,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 29 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Origen, acting on a mistaken view of Matt. xix. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. v. 39.



so far as the destiny to which He had devoted Himself then permitted: 'If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou Me?'<sup>1</sup> How could a State exist at the present day whose Christian character was such that every one handed over his cloke as well to the man who desired to go to law with him for his coat<sup>2</sup>? On the other occasion Christ in almost the same words spoke with regard to the Divine institution of marriage, in answer to a question as to the lawfulness of putting away one's wife for any kind of cause. At that time in the Jewish schools the degradation of the wife had reached such a pitch that a husband could put her away on account of the soup being burnt, or because another wife pleased him better. We should not overlook the fact that the putting away of a wife at the instance of such arbitrary exercise of any fancy, is something different from divorce in accordance with a fixed law, through the action of the established authorities in a Christian State. And yet among both Catholics and Protestants the parallel is recognized as true that when Christ forbade every oath, He merely forbade it in ordinary life and in the contemplation of an ideal kingdom of the future, where truth alone was to have sway, but not in these days when sincerity and lies are mingled together, and not in the face of legally constituted authorities. In any case Christ gave His decision under the direct impression of the arbitrary character of the dissolution of marriages at that day, and therefore only in relation to the putting away of a *wife*. Nevertheless He gave it in favour of the indissoluble character of marriage.

But immediately an exception forced itself upon

<sup>1</sup> John xviii, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. v. 40.



Him arising out of actual life, viz. the infidelity of the woman; and so His decision ceases to be absolute.

Marriage, like every moral relationship, is hallowed and elevated by Christianity, but it is not something external to the Christian scheme, but a Divine ordinance, as our ancient theologians said, instituted in Paradise, and merely restored by means of Christ, 'as it was from the beginning.'<sup>1</sup> Accordingly a reasonable ground for that exception to its indissoluble nature must be perceptible. The sexual infidelity of one partner affects marriage so profoundly on account of the fact that its characteristic quality, as distinguished from a bond of friendship, consists precisely in the sexual surrender, so that married folk are held to become not merely one in heart, but also one in flesh. Notwithstanding in this matter more weight than is fitting on the part of those familiar with the use of words, has been attached to the alarming name of adultery, which our modest and poetic tongue has applied to every sexual excess on the part of married persons. Christ speaks only of unchastity, which in any case is a grievous offence, and also under certain circumstances dissolves marriage, yet by no means *ipso facto* and absolutely. It is as universally recognized as it is a matter of fact that after the disastrous moment of such excess, especially on the side of the husband, supposing it to pass away or be for ever concealed in the gloom of night, so many marriages continue operative. If they were actually broken by that act they could no more be re-established by the mere act of will of the injured partner than contracted among us merely by that means.

But as under particular circumstances and with

<sup>1</sup> See Matt. xix. 8.



particular characters marriage considered as a union of hearts is killed by infidelity, so too is it with like justice on other grounds. With what justice can a marriage be considered to hold good, if one partner attempts the life of the other? A simple blow directed against a wife of noble nature can produce the same effect as under uncivilized conditions an attempted death-blow. There are marriage unions that are so deeply violated and broken, that their continuance would be actually a breach of morals. With what justice is an honest husband to be held as remaining bound to his wife, if she earns her livelihood by the occupation of a pimp; or an honourable wife to a husband who throughout the course of their marriage has only sought to deprave her mind, and now, devoid of her love and respect, is condemned to imprisonment for life on account of some disgraceful crime? Or wherefore should a husband, whose temperament and circumstances demand a family life, be condemned to what is in fact celibacy, because his wife, though still alive, is incurable in an asylum, and perhaps some minister of religion, without the support of any physician, says that it is possible that by a miracle, since with God all things are possible, she may regain her understanding?

St. Paul reminds the community at Corinth of our Lord's words concerning the indissoluble character of marriage. But it also strikes him that there is an exception, arising out of the circumstances of the community at that time, viz. the marriage of the Christian with the unbeliever, and its abandonment by the latter. He feels conscious that he is thereby making a fresh breach in the ideal claims of marriage. He draws a clear distinction: 'But to the rest say I, not the Lord.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 12.



By the same right the Protestant Church as well has recognized other exceptions to the indissoluble character as they presented themselves in the course of time out of the developments of social life. The Church which limits itself to its religious sphere, without the assumption of the papal claim to seek to subject to its exclusive jurisdiction a relationship like marriage that has so close a hold upon civil conditions with all the disputatious questions involved as to temporal matters, might readily concede that the Christian State should lay down the conditions of divorce, provided that it has regard to the ecclesiastical sentiments and views of a nation. In accordance with those principles to decide what in its own view should remain undissolved, befits the sword of the State rather than the pastoral staff of the Church. The latter blesses marriages, not severs them. But that sword, so far as it legally and wisely severs what from an internal point of view has irremediably severed itself, has in this matter not been placed in vain in the hands of the governing power as the minister of God. A judicious, or let us say boldly a Christian legislation, or strictly speaking the conscientious judicial administration of the same, is bound only to take care that a temporary disagreement and a conquerable aversion do not through the ease of obtaining a divorce lead to the guilt and unhappiness that it involves, so that through ill-considered union and separation a great principle of both State and Church be not shaken. It is only the marriage which proves itself to be already incurably broken from the point of view of the heart, which ought to be annulled, and even then subject to inconvenient and cumbrous legal formalities.

But the principal question concerns the contracting



of a fresh marriage on the part of those who are separated, and this is the vital part of the controversy, which, moreover, not long ago led a section of the Prussian clergy, who view the Bible as the Turks do the Koran, to pass over to the Catholic camp. Christ says: He that 'shall marry her when she is put away committeth adultery'.<sup>1</sup> Is then the minister of Christ to bestow the Church's blessing upon adultery, or, according to the permissible Catholic form, to countenance a profanation by means of his presence? The letter of Holy Scripture here seems to be in direct opposition to the requirements of actual Christian life, so that the lament of St. Augustine<sup>2</sup> that the Divine directions in this matter were so obscure that it was pardonable to err in carrying them out, may still be heard, only with a different application.

We must above all remember that our Lord, in requiring a high standard of morality in thought, gives a harsher name to its violation than ordinary use of language and mode of thought involves. He also said: 'Every one that looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.'<sup>3</sup> Is then an existing marriage dissolved simply through this adultery of the eye? By the same reasoning, if marriage union with one divorced was in the real and full sense adultery, then, inasmuch as this was absolutely permitted in the minute legislation of the Old Testament as to marriage, the Divine law of that time permitted adultery. In fine, error and sin it is true attaches to all that leads to divorce, and that is the everlasting verity contained in our Lord's words; but if a divorced person, man or woman, has found a

<sup>1</sup> Matt. v. 32.<sup>2</sup> *De Fide et Opp.* c. 17. [H.]<sup>3</sup> Matt. v. 28.



companion who is able with confidence to form a fresh union, or if it be even a case of two persons who have made their escape from different marriage unions, for what is it that they are seeking the blessing of the Church? Is it for adultery? No, but for a fresh marriage which yearns to receive a benediction after a Christian manner in hope and prayer, that it be not contracted carelessly or unhappily like the earlier one which God had not joined.

It occurs so frequently, also through the fault of our social relationships, that those who have gone astray together arrive at last at marriage. Is it then the unchastity upon which the minister bestows the blessing of the Church? No, it is the marriage which receives the blessing with a view to a better future through pious resolutions and hopes. The guilt lies behind always, and, according as the heart is penitent and faithful, is pardoned or retained by God. In the same way the divorce and its guilt lies behind. In both cases the minister may make mention of this guilt with serious and, if the circumstances demand it, with punitive admonition, only he has no right to deny the Church's blessing to those who desire to enter upon a Christian marriage.

But 'what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder'.<sup>1</sup> For those who are unversed in the thing it doubtless seems a contradiction and a crime that even the Protestant Church pronounces these words of consecration over every marriage, and yet, when the case demands it, recognizes as valid divorce by the lawful authorities. But after all does every one seriously believe that, as the proverb says, marriages are made in heaven? Yet all the thousand marriages

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xix. 6.



which are only too certainly contracted upon earth as the outcome of a moment of sensual desire, or those which are concluded for the sake of money and frivolous circumstances, often not even by the parties primarily concerned, testify by the development of the germ of dissolution, which they have contained within them from the beginning, that they were not joined by God. Nay, those actually resolved and contracted in heaven are indeed indissoluble. But how numerous are the couples over whom the minister in a large city must pronounce that solemn formula, when, if their inmost motives were known to him, he would prefer to invoke God's gracious mercy and forgiveness!

The idea that God always ratifies the words of the priest in their application to individual persons, is nothing but extravagant fancy or hierarchical pride, often both together. Our poor human words, even where in accordance with the Divine promise they are pronounced over the single definite case, can never mean more than this: We hope that this marriage is brought about by God, as the betrothed profess at present to believe, and no man shall henceforth be justified in separating them against their will. In this way the possibility is not excluded that this marriage may be dissolved in the sphere of the heart, and that those thus united may arrive at the mournful consciousness that they are not brought together by God. In order to know with complete certainty that a marriage is concluded in heaven, the words of the priest are not decisive nor the youthful inebriation of the honeymoon. There is needed for it a long tested experience in good and evil days; nay, strictly speaking, it is known as an infallible certainty only to that partner who, at last, weeping, closes the dear faithful



eyes which have been the source of happiness alike to spouse and children.

Undoubtedly an indissoluble character belongs to the idea of marriage, but the working out of this idea is hindered not merely by the hardness of men's hearts, on account of which Moses permitted to give the wife 'a bill of divorcement',<sup>1</sup> but also by the error which no doubt in the last resort always contains an element of sin, yet, humanly speaking, is sometimes blameworthy, sometimes not. I doubt not that, if Christ, instead of declaring the underlying permanent truth, had desired to establish a definite legal ordinance—in fact, instead of a principle, to lay down a law—He would also have had regard to this possible error. Because two human beings have perhaps united themselves in a youth which was half a dream, or have merely been united by others, are they bound to be riveted together like galley-slaves throughout their lives?

The Catholic Church in such cases permits separation from bed and board<sup>2</sup>, and in most cases with less of difficulty than, according to the law among Protestants, is involved in a divorce. Pronounced for an indefinite time it constitutes in point of fact a divorce, only with the legal fiction that the marriage still continues, as the Canon law distinctly expresses. No loosing from the fetter (*de vinculo*) takes place. That fetter continues to clank upon the feet of those who are to all appearance set free: hence the impossibility of a fresh marriage. Where then a desire has been formed in this direction, where it is increasing, owing to a fancy which has gathered strength, in such a case, even where a better nature is on its guard to resist,

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxiv. 1, 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Conc. Trid. S. XXIV*, can. 8. [H.]



there arises the wish for the death of the distant, unloved, and now but nominal partner, and it is admitted that this wish has with bold and unconscientious persons developed into an act of crime. But the ordinary result is concubinage and other excess, easily justified in the forum of the man's conscience by his exasperation against the Church which has only left him this outlet for living according to the dictates of nature. But the better class of men are compelled, by reason of one error of selection, to lie for life under the curse of finding permanently denied to them not only happiness, but also the due complement to the narrowness of individual existence, by means of a married life, with all the blessings which the Creator has bestowed upon it. Accordingly a State which has become possessed of liberty of action is justified in no longer recognizing such a phantom marriage, but considers severance from bed and board for an indefinite time, i.e. for ever, as a complete dissolution of this marriage.

It has been objected that in the serious maintenance of the indissoluble character of marriage there lies a security against ill-considered unions. Moreover in any case stress is thereby laid upon keeping alive in the popular mind the consciousness of the claims to an ordinance deserving of all honour, rather than upon the happiness or unhappiness of individuals. The former of these arguments has not stood the test of experience. If young people throw themselves into each other's arms, even in the case of *mariages de convenance*, moderately honest people do not think of the greater or less difficulty of separating again in case of need. If the higher classes, like the peasantry, in most instances marry from consideration of position and means, while in the intermediate ranks of the community marriage



is mostly the result of sterling affection, yet in the case of the Romance nations, particularly the Catholic ones, some generations ago even among those ranks there was less opportunity for individual choice and affection. It was in accordance with an agreement on the part of the parents that young women came out of the nunnery schools to be married, in most cases unknown by sight to their future husbands. In spite of the Common Law of Prussia marriages are not as a rule entered upon in Berlin with less heed than in Rome, where not unfrequently a prelate is standing behind the bridegroom.

But those sacrifices which devote people to a life of solitude are offered not to a Divine command, but to a human decision which merely conceals itself behind a Scriptural passage so as to accustom people, even in their most private interests of heart and home, to the surveillance of an unqualified priestly sway. Nevertheless it is not purely arbitrary on the part of the Catholic Church, as is evidenced moreover in fact by the tendency of families of high rank connected with the Protestant Church to conform to this Catholic decision. It is that tendency which, as constituting the essence of Catholicism, takes care that the Church shall be effective in all points, and in spite of all opposing influences for the realization of its ideas. In this case then its intention was to attain without more ado the realization of the idea of marriage, but being thwarted by the stubborn conditions of actual life, it found a sorry remedy in those divorces at once granted and denied, as well as in declaring null and void marriages which are real yet unendurable.



### C. Impediments to Marriage.

The Council of Trent maintained as an article of faith the right of the Church, always and without being confined to the Old Testament prohibitions in such cases, to define the degrees of relationship by means of which a marriage is prevented, or one already entered upon, cancelled as null and void. If this be an infallible right, yet the Roman Church has exercised it with equal imprudence and oppressiveness, for by combining the degrees of relationship forbidden by the Jewish and by the Roman law, and by the amalgamation of their method of calculation with the German, the result was that marriage was forbidden to the sixth and seventh stage of cousinhood, and in fact among all relations of any kind. To this were added the forbidden degrees of affinity by marriage. Inasmuch as by the union both parties were made one flesh, so too the families of both became related by blood. In particular it resulted that a union so obvious in the natural course of things was excluded, that a widower should give his deceased wife's sister to the children whom she had left behind her as their mother. As though this were not enough, there was moreover devised a new relationship, a *spiritual* one, by means of the fiction that Baptism, as being a new birth, was to be considered as a spiritual birth, and the sponsors as parents. In this way, they said, an actual relationship takes place between the sponsors and the baptized child, its parents, and one another. In fact, this relationship as a bar to marriage was extended further to the blood relatives of the spiritual relatives, and even to sponsors as customary at Confirmation.

Inasmuch as owing to the insecurity and difficulty



of the roads in mediaeval times life in many hamlets and localities was as much isolated as it is still in many impassable mountain valleys, it was often difficult for the inhabitants to find in their neighbourhood a match which did not fall into this net of forbidden relationship, while it was easy to hunt out a relationship which should cancel a marriage already existent. This certainly was often made use of, and in fact was originally devised in order to shake off an irksome marriage. Fredegonda enticed the spouse of King Chilperic<sup>1</sup>, a royal lady of the Western Goths, to stand godmother to her own daughter in the king's absence. Chilperic recognized this as constituting a relationship by which his marriage was dissolved, in order to marry Fredegonda. The marriage was not ended by divorce on the ground of a relationship having transpired, but was declared to have been null and void from the beginning. This was always a harsh method, in which the wife was driven out as a concubine, and the children came to be bastards, although they might then as innocent parties be legitimized by favour of Pope or king. Moreover, a marriage which was a happy one might be disturbed and ruined by such a discovery. Dunstan<sup>2</sup>, the monastic bishop who ruled England with awe-inspiring sway, declared the marriage of King Edwin the Fair<sup>3</sup> with Elgiva to be null and void on account of the discovery of a distant relationship. When the young king, who could not let go his beloved wife, took her

<sup>1</sup> Chilperic I, king of Neustria 561-84. His wife was Galeswintha, sister of Brunehilde, wife of Siegbert of Austrasia (an extensive region on both sides of the Rhine, with Metz for its capital). Fredegonda was afterwards (593) regent for her son, Clotaire II.

<sup>2</sup> The noted abbot of Glastonbury, abp. of Canterbury ; d. 988.

<sup>3</sup> It was really Eadwig, 955-8.



to him again, Dunstan caused her face to be disfigured with hot iron, and the tendons of her feet to be cut through. The king died of a broken heart. History relates the tragic fate of kings. How many humble marriages have been ruined through those arbitrary laws and their execution by the hierarchy, we know not.

This condition of things had become so unendurable that Innocent III reduced the bar to marriage to the fourth degree of relationship or of affinity, and also, on reasonable grounds being alleged, granted a dispensation in the case of this degree, as being merely a human decision of a natural kind. The Council of Trent<sup>1</sup> did not conceal the inconvenience, which was merely somewhat alleviated; yet it confined itself to curtailing the spiritual relationship. It also resolved that there should never be a dispensation granted in the second degree (first cousins), except in the case of great princes, and in more distant degrees only for weighty reasons, without payment however. This last article of the Tridentine belief the Court of Rome, which has assumed these dispensations to itself, is accustomed to set aside, and makes out high official fees in proportion to the available assets: Protestant Consistorial Courts, however, are also at home in this matter. Modern canonists advise another revision of the marriage laws in order to bring them into harmony with the settled demands of the time. They advise the reduction of the forbidden degrees of relationship to that of first cousins, the forbidden degrees of affinity in collateral lines to the first degree, and spiritual relationship to the marriage of a god-parent to the person baptized; but the attachment to ancient tradition and the profit accruing to the

<sup>1</sup> *S. XXIV, de Reform. Matr. c. 2, 5.* [H.]



papal court has for this long time caused these moderate proposals to pass unheeded.

The abhorrence of the sexual union of near relatives by blood, though it is not a primitive, is yet a natural sentiment, which has been wisely guarded by custom and law for the protection of family life and to ensure soundness on the part of the nation's descent. It has been intensified by the dread of incest. But the relationship of *souls*, though excluding perhaps the highest degree of reverence, yet bestows on the corporeal relationship of marriage its fairest human import. The spiritual relationship abandoned by the Reformers<sup>1</sup> as a hindrance to marriage is therefore nothing but one of the fanciful ideas of the Church, which makes a potent reality out of a figure of speech, and then with destructive results drags this phantom into actual life.

#### D. Mixed Marriages.

Under *mixed* marriages is understood the marriage of persons of different religions, in particular of a Catholic and a non-Catholic. By this last negative designation modern Catholic usage likes to indicate members of the Protestant Evangelical and of the Greek Orthodox Church, instead of the appellation 'heretic and schismatic,' which is uncourteous, and also in German countries not legally correct.

On the religious and political seclusion of the Hebrew nation was based the prohibition to intermarry with the heathen, and the grandson of Aaron in his zeal for the Lord transfixes with his spear the two, the Israelitish husband and the heathen woman<sup>2</sup>. But the prohibition was afterwards disregarded with

<sup>1</sup> *Art. Smalc.* p. 355. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxv. 6-13.



less risk by the chief persons in the nation, and there was still less hesitation about handing over Jewish daughters to heathen husbands. In the Church of the Apostles it must often have happened that one of the two was laid hold of by the Gospel, while the other continued in anti-Christian Judaism or in the worship of national gods. St. Paul, who already considers the whole of mankind as destined to embrace Christianity, expresses warm confidence in the unruffled maintenance of such marriage ties. The unbelieving partner is sanctified by the believing one, and from such a union spring children that are holy<sup>1</sup>. Since this cannot be understood of a magical consecration in the Apostle's mind, it has to do with the silent blessing of religious influence, which involves the hope inspired by God that the believing one will lead the unbeliever and the children to salvation. The Apostle speaks of existing marriages which have become mixed by the introduction of the Gospel, but his reasoning is of so general a kind that it holds good for those which were yet to be entered upon.

But the morals of the Christian family renouncing the world and holding communion with God stood so sharply contrasted with the pagan household with its worldly and idolatrous pleasures, that Tertullian, while he sketches the ideal of Christian marriage, sets forth also the impossibility of a marriage union with a worshipper of idols, and St. Cyprian terms such a union the prostitution of members of Christ to Antichrist. Ever after the Church declared herself against these marriages, although the fact remains that St. Augustine was sprung from such a mixed union. It appertained to the development of Catholicism

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. vii. 14.



from the fourth century onwards that heretics were compared to Jews and heathen. Various synodical laws of this date declared marriages with them to be sinful. The imperial laws after Justinian's<sup>1</sup> time absolutely forbade such marriages, and in certain cases imposed the punishment of death. The mediaeval Popes shared this abhorrence, and considered the union of a Catholic and a heretic to be like incest. In the Schoolmen's teaching, however, the gentler opinion was laid down that such a mixed marriage was irregular but valid. The Council of Trent adopted this view, so far at least as to say that heresy does not dissolve marriage. The Popes regarded Protestants as heretics. Owing to the force of political circumstances in their bearing upon the Church, they were at length induced to bestow dispensations for mixed marriages, but under severe restrictions, and post-Tridentine theology set forth the doctrine that the Pope alone can bestow them. The first public dispensation was that given by Urban VIII in 1624 for union of the sister of Louis XIII to the heir of the English throne, Charles II.<sup>2</sup> It was stipulated that the queen should have in her palace a bishop with twelve Capuchins for the undisturbed observance of her worship, and that all the children to be looked for from this marriage should be brought up in the Catholic religion till their fifteenth year. In Germany the people did not wait for papal dispensations. After the terrible experiences of the Thirty Years' War mixed nationalities lived together at peace and enjoying equality of

<sup>1</sup> Flavius Anicius Justinian I, Byzantine emperor 527-65. The body of Roman law, compiled and annotated at his command, forms a most important monument of jurisprudence.

<sup>2</sup> Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV of France, married in 1625 Charles I ("Charles II" is a slip on the part of von Hase).



rights. Young hearts too found themselves in unison, without troubling themselves as to ecclesiastical divergencies. The bishops permitted what they could not hinder without greater evil resulting. As a rule they required, as the conditions of a Catholic betrothal, from the member of their own faith the promise to use the best endeavours for the conversion of the heretical one, on the side of the Protestant abstinence from endangering the Catholic partner's faith, and that all the children should be brought up as Catholics. The requirement was often carried out. But what if the Protestant partner remained firm and did not desire to be an apostate to his own Church with respect to the children with which God should bless the marriage? Then either the hands which had been joined had again to be parted asunder, or, since in most cases the natural attraction of two hearts is more powerful than a stiff ecclesiastical prohibition, the Catholic partner was contented with Protestant betrothal, and if thereupon the Church launched its censures, it was easy to take refuge in the other Church. Accordingly where the strictness of the Catholic Church tended to its disadvantage, the clergy here and there relaxed their demands. Thus it came about that among Spanish and Italian teachers of Church law the naïve decision was framed that marriages between Catholics and heretics are doubtless a mortal sin, but according to the statements of distinguished teachers are to be held as permissible in Germany.

Even in Rome the total change in the times could not be denied. Benedict XIV, who was of opinion that princes must not be made averse to requesting anything which they could easily take by force, and who readily made use of his ecclesiastical



erudition to discover relaxations of the law, so far as Roman principles allowed them, termed mixed marriages abominable, execrable, never to be approved by the See of Rome. Nevertheless when no law of God or of nature is thereby violated, that See may perhaps grant a dispensation where the avoiding of a greater evil demands it. But to avoid approval on the part of the Church as expressed by the betrothal, in his declaration of 1741 for the Netherlands he recommended that such marriages should be contracted with the priest present, but merely passive. When Frederick the Great, by agreement with the Prince-bishop of Breslau, had directed that children of mixed marriages should be brought up in the religion of the parents according to their sex, with the repeal of all opposing decisions, the Pope issued a writ to the Prince-bishop, that he could not in a positive way approve of such a decision, but that he might perhaps overlook it. 'Our knowledge and tolerance must suffice to quiet your conscience, so far as this matter is not opposed to the law of God or of nature, but purely to ecclesiastical law. But we swear to you at the feet of the Crucified One that what we do in this way we do only in order to avert from our holy religion greater detriment.'

At the beginning of the nineteenth century this passed for ordinary German law that where a written marriage compact did not stipulate for anything different the sons should be brought up in the religion of their father, the daughters in that of their mother. It was only in the countries which were directly subject to the imperial house and in Hungary that there existed the following unjust law, viz. if the father is a Catholic all the children are to be brought up as Catholics; if



the father is a Protestant, it is only the sons that follow him. Moreover Joseph II left this unfair law unaltered, and serving to promote the ascendancy of the Catholic State. Catholic priests, however, not unfrequently granted betrothal without security for the bringing up of the children. In Rome silence was kept upon the subject. The old baron Gagern<sup>1</sup> relates that cardinal Consalvi<sup>2</sup> once said to him: 'We know it well, and rejoice when we do not have experience of it, and we gladly shut our eyes when the bishops and other authorities are dealing with it. But formally to approve—never!' Catholicism in its days of renewed energy could no longer permit the Pope such shutting of the eyes.

In *Prussia* the common law was altered in 1803 in this respect, that children born in wedlock were to be instructed collectively in the religion of the father in all cases where the parents were not agreed in desiring that it should be otherwise. Prussia, at heart and in its essential character a Protestant State, on two occasions received a large access of Catholic population within its frontiers, one in the east, owing to the Silesian war and the partition of Poland<sup>3</sup>, the other in the west, owing in great measure to the war with France<sup>4</sup>, involving ancient Church property in Westphalia and on the Rhine. These together formed a third part of the collective population of the State. Law and custom, as regards the numerous mixed marriages in the frontier country on the western side, were fluctuating. If the bridegroom was a Catholic, the application of the general law of the State was

<sup>1</sup> Hans Christoph Ernst von Gagern, a German politician and diplomatist; d. 1852.

<sup>2</sup> Ercole Consalvi, Secretary of State to Pius VII; d. 1824.

<sup>3</sup> There were three partitions of Poland, each forming an accession to the Prussian kingdom, viz. 1773, 1793, 1795.

<sup>4</sup> In 1815, on the overthrow of Napoleon I.



obvious. If the bride was a Catholic, and the betrothal accordingly belonged by law to her priest, the Catholic bringing up of all the children was as a rule made the condition, and was often carried through. Thus every mixed marriage deprived the Protestant Church of a portion of its next generation, and Catholic journals already were calculating how many generations would be necessary to reabsorb by this method of 'silent Reformation' the intrusive Protestant population.

An Order of Council in 1825 directed that the law of 1803 should be fully operative in these provinces as well, declared the opposing requirement of a Catholic training for the resulting children to be an abuse, and agreements entered into on the part of the affianced to be for that reason null and void, and desired to leave no valid reason that would prevent mixed marriages, where this was not made a condition, from being blessed by Catholic priests. There was to be no interference hereby as regards the joint wish of the parents. If the marriage has been consummated by the couple living together and is blessed with children, then the legal direction gave way to the wish of the family. Its organ on the side of the State is the power of compulsion possessed by the father. The results in the two cases will moreover mostly differ. The Protestant, in order to obtain the girl he loves, will more readily let himself be hurried into promises that he will, when already a father of a family, allow himself to be induced to renounce the right conferred on him by the law, and bring up his children in the belief of a Church which is not his. But the carrying out of the Order in Council appeared to Catholic enthusiasm to be a deadly injury, not only because the hopes above referred to were thereby cut



off, but also because both thought and experience had shown them that many young civilians and officers were transferred to these districts from the older parts of Prussia, who then had the skill to win the hearts of the daughters of the prominent Catholic families. If from such marriages Protestant families were permitted to take their rise, heresy would in a few generations gain the upper hand in these districts which had from of old belonged to the Church, while the latter would be compelled to take up an inferior position. The clergy accordingly were wont to evade the new law by no longer demanding indeed a formal promise, but simply refusing to carry out the betrothal unless the promise was voluntarily offered and fulfilled. The government, approached with numerous complaints on this account, applied to the bishops concerned. They were no zealots, least of all the archbishop of Cologne, Count Spiegel, but persons of old-fashioned, or if you like of a dull type. However, a powerful reinvigorated Catholicism had meanwhile grown up, with which they had to reckon. They referred the matter to the Holy Father as the one who alone could give permission, so as to render the carrying out of the Order in Council possible. Accordingly the government in 1828 sent to the Pope the bishops' communications, while it set forth that, apart from any personal views of the sovereign, they must as Prussian authorities maintain equal rights as between Protestants and Catholics, and can permit no evasion of their just law, which is carried out in the eastern provinces of the monarchy without any risk to the Catholic Church.

The crown of Prussia was not an object of detestation in Rome, but was regarded as a strong opponent



is regarded, one who is such first through his birth, and then through the force of circumstances as prevailing over all human freedom of choice, and yet one who has everywhere given proof of personal goodwill. It had not been forgotten that in the days when spiritual princes still resided by the Rhine the papal nuncio had not applied in vain to Prussia in opposition to their hostile views. But now the difficulty lay in the subject itself. A power which more than any other rests upon the past and upon the intentions of the faithful, might hesitate by imposing easy conditions to encourage mixed marriages, which mediaeval faith had abhorred as a sacrilege, and so to do something which zealous Catholics could deem treachery to the Church which alone imparts salvation. Apart from dispensations for altogether exceptional cases of a political nature, a Pope had never given public permission for that which had based itself upon German custom, viz. the performance of mixed marriages if the promises required were given, and thus the bestowal upon the head of a heretic of the full blessing of the Church. Even the presence of the priest as a mere looker on in the special case when every guarantee for the Catholic bringing up of the children was refused, or, in fact, was said not even to have been demanded, had as yet never been declared by Rome to be permissible. Therefore, in order not harshly to contradict the mediaeval view, not to excite the zealots, and, in keeping with the ways of Rome, not to sacrifice any principles which might be wanted in better days, the Brief of 1830 addressed to the bishops of western Prussia, in place of simple, straightforward definitions, contains an unctuous effusion and concessions within limits.



According to these the Holy Father is not free in conscience to grant all that is requisite for the carrying out of the law of the kingdom, for the Popes, if they granted dispensations for such marriages, forbidden as they were and fraught with spiritual danger, had always made suitable guarantees to be a condition. Accordingly, if a Catholic woman desires to unite herself to a non-Catholic husband, she is to be diligently instructed by the bishop or priest that this step is a forbidden and dangerous one. She is to be reminded of the unalterable dogma that no one can be saved who is outside the Catholic faith, and how terribly even now she would be acting towards the children whom she might expect to be given her of God, if she knew that their future bringing up was dependent upon the option of the non-Catholic husband. But if these paternal exhortations should prove of no effect, the Catholic person should yet not be punished with ecclesiastical censures, lest any sort of agitation should arise. In this connexion it is merely stated that at some places, in order to avert grievous harm to Catholic interests, the passive presence of the priest is then to be connived at, on the understanding that he guard himself from expressing approval of such marriages by any token on his part, or from saying any prayers to hallow the transaction.

After long negotiations with the Prussian ambassador, the learned and witty Bunsen<sup>1</sup>, who at that time still belonged to the sect of Pietists, this Brief was drawn up, was returned as unsatisfactory, and then accepted again, and in 1834 published to the bishops by the king's government. That govern-

<sup>1</sup> Christian Karl Josias, Baron von (or Chevalier) Bunsen, a distinguished German scholar and diplomatist; d. 1860.



ment disapproved in particular of the prescribed annoyance to be given to the Catholic bride, which was regarded with popular disfavour as an examination held upon her; also of this simply passive presence, which is considered among Catholics and Protestants of the time as a mere licensing of concubinage. The government accordingly induced the bishops to come to a private 'understanding as to the carrying out of the Pope's Brief', in which they availed themselves of its extreme vagueness in order to give an explanation of it in their sense. In this it is affirmed that the directions of the Order in Council of 1825 could in accordance with the Brief be carried out. Accordingly the exaction or delivery of a promise with regard to the bringing up of the children in the religion of one or the other partner was to be abandoned. Moreover, there remains but one case barely conceivable, in which betrothal might be refused, namely, only if the bride is *certain* that *all* the children will be brought up as Protestants, and if in the face of this certainty she exhibits reprehensible levity and indifference in respect to her religious profession and to her future duties as a parent.

The king's government had obtained by means of this understanding all which Gregory XVI maintained that he could not grant without treachery to the duties of his apostolic office. This was a peculiar state of things. It has happened more than once that Catholic kings, after they have failed to come to terms with the Pope, have then by a public agreement with the bishops and persons of position in their own kingdom settled what the welfare of the State in relation to the Church required. But in



this case the Pope's decree was published to the bishops with the royal approval, and delivered by them to the clergy as the welcomed decision of the Viceroy of Christ, while yet privately all arrangements had been made to carry out something inconsistent with it. This was very carefully introduced so as to avoid causing any sensation or opposition. In the first place the carrying out of the decree was committed to the clergy, only with the indication in a covering pastoral letter that the difficulty is now removed, and that the gentlest interpretation of the decree is that which accords with the sense put upon it by the bishops. Accordingly it was to be expected that peace-loving clergy would be induced, at the request of the parties concerned, to give their blessing to mixed marriages without definite promises of the kind that the Order in Council forbade, while the more strong-minded, in order not to have to bear alone the odium of refusal, would interrogate the episcopal authorities; or, at any rate, the parties concerned, if they saw that a milder course was being pursued in other communities, would refer the matter in the form of a complaint to the episcopal authorities. A secret instruction in the sense of the understanding was also issued to them on the part of the bishops, according to which they had to come to a decision upon the individual case, and thus people ventured to hope that the new use might be introduced without being noticed.

A rumour of these arrangements reached Rome early in 1836, soon followed by a copy of the instructions issued by the bishops, but not quite accurate in some details. The Pope caused this to be submitted to the Prussian ambassador with a suggestion



as to the necessity of undeceiving the faithful, that they might not ascribe to the Holy See a course of action which was alien to it. Bunsen was disposed to disclaim everything in ambiguous language, and to prompt the bishops to send communications which, dictated by the government, should by general phrases set the Pope at rest and represent the whole matter as settled in the desired way. So rare was it for a powerful Protestant king to set himself up against the court whose craft and duplicity had become a proverb among the nations.

Still the king's government intended to carry the matter through successfully. The Catholic party among the aristocracy had acquired a determined leader in the person of the new archbishop of Cologne, baron Droste-Vischering. He had been made archbishop through the king's desire, in consequence of his declared intention of supporting the 'understanding' with the bishops which was framed in conformity with the Brief, and was in operation in their dioceses, and moreover in applying it in a peace-loving spirit. But when he put forth this promise, he was not familiar with the 'understanding', although his brother, the bishop of Münster, had shared in the drawing up of it, and lived in the same town with him. When he afterwards came to know this 'understanding', and to observe its inconsistency with the Brief, he declared that he could only observe the 'understanding' so far as it corresponded to the Brief, and he altered the procedure in his diocese accordingly. This, taken in connexion with other instances of lack of docility, the government considered to be faithlessness to his promise and disobedience, and, after in vain requiring him to discontinue the duties of his office, in November,



1837, they had him arrested and lodged in the fortress of Minden on the charge, preferred publicly though never judicially, that in contravention of his word and of his duty he had attempted, under the influence of two revolutionary factions, to overthrow the existing laws.

The aim at that time in Prussia was to be able to enforce everything by means of the corporal's cane. The gentle-tempered king<sup>1</sup>, who had in past time showed much friendliness to the Catholic Church, was swayed by fear of revolutionary intrigues. They were bright days for the Catholic Church. The Pope, to whom in a marvellously confiding spirit the Prussian ministry had appealed, venerated the archbishop as a martyr, and rejected the new practice illegally introduced with regard to mixed marriages. The aged Görres<sup>2</sup> employed that emphatic and flowery eloquence, which had formerly flouted the Pope and the bishops of Rhineland<sup>3</sup>, in a defiant apology for the archbishop, which tore the veil from the antecedent diplomatic deception. The Catholic population of Rhineland and Westphalia, at that time but little Prussian in their sentiments, saw themselves wounded in their religion by what they termed Protestant bureaucratic violence, and all political dissatisfaction was concentrated in this Catholic community of feeling. The result was that the bishops belonging to the monarchy, except one who resigned his post, reverted to the most strict interpretation of the Brief, and the government submitted to it. It was a war between the Catholic

<sup>1</sup> Frederick William III.

<sup>2</sup> Jakob Joseph von Görres, a German author, who in former days had supported French revolutionary principles; d. 1848.

<sup>3</sup> Literally, of the priests' quarter, a name given to the Rhine on account of the great number of conventual institutions on its banks.



Church and the State, in particular the Protestant State. The new king<sup>1</sup>, who came to the throne in 1840, purchased the restoration of peace with the Church by great concessions.

It is as a matter of conscience that both Churches dissuade from a mixed marriage, for the difference of Church tone will always cast a dark shadow over such, and to an extent proportionate to its vitality: but both Churches will act with thoughtful care so as not to overdo their opposition to the individual union of hearts, when this has been already formed, and this not of necessity owing to indifference on the part of the Church, but in accordance with an eternal ordinance of nature, at the bidding of which the instinctive desire for wedlock not only forsakes father and mother, but also, where it is awakened to become an absolute passion, breaks through the bounds of rank, of nationality, and so too of Churches. The Protestant Church has yet greater reason to dread these marriages, because through the power of the confessional, and the anxiety of the Catholic partner for the eternal salvation of all that is held dear, it easily gets the worst of it with regard to the children—in other words, to the future members of the Church; while the Catholic Church displays its mediaeval repugnance to them almost simply as a piece of tradition, inasmuch as it is aware that, provided the Church is not prevented by the secular power from enforcing the conditions that it imposes, mixed marriages have a very decided effect in the spread of Catholicism.

A Christian and truly conservative State containing populations belonging to both Churches will make it a point that they live together in peace; a thing which

<sup>1</sup> Frederick William IV.



is only possible if equality of rights prevents mutual encroachments. The State is therefore fully justified in imposing a general law for the bringing up of children of mixed marriages. Reasons can be adduced for both the forms of this law which are traditional in Germany, viz. that all the children follow the religion of the father, or that the matter is determined by their sex. In favour of the first form against the second, stress is laid upon the fact that through the latter the difference between the Churches is propagated in the family, and thus the concord of the members of the family is undermined. Nevertheless there is involved of necessity in the first form an element of compulsion, the sole right of the father and of his Church. To the mother, although she may acquiesce in the law and devote herself to the dictates of affection, there will ever be a sting in the thought that all which her bosom has borne is alien to her own Church. She will hardly find comfort in the fact that the same fortune befalls the mother belonging to the other Church, and the hardship will merely present itself as harder, if after the death of the husband the mother should be compelled to bring up all the children in a creed which is not hers. A Church already existent possesses the guarantee of its stability which is naturally based upon the children born in its bosom, since in fact the mass of mankind are so constituted that sentiments excited in our childhood and religious ideas of that time are decisive of our whole life. Therefore each member of the Church not merely in his own person during the short span of this life belongs to a particular Church, but also bears within him an immense future owing to the hope and implied undertaking that, if God grant children, these shall belong to the same Church. This



hope is unnaturally cut off by means of every mixed marriage, the children of which are exclusively pledged to the other Church. Moreover in many places, as was the case on the Rhine, there would certainly be involved in the maintenance of the father's rights a depreciation of the other Church, which necessarily excites the opposition of the clergy. In any case this law at once required the other to be appended to it, that in the case of mixed marriages the betrothal regularly takes place by the minister of the bridegroom's Church. If, on the other hand, the children are classified according to sex, the only result is that what is already exhibited in the case of the father and mother is rendered permanent. It is the really conservative system, inasmuch as each Church has preserved to it the sex which it has contributed to the union, and it rests with the mysterious forces of nature, with the dispensation of God, which side shall have the majority. It is the natural and fair arrangement, to which a reasonable and humble disposition readily assents, while retaining all fidelity to its own Church. Moreover in such cases it will happen that the antagonism between the Churches will be softened by means of brotherly and sisterly affection and the example of the parents, and thus the family will be a picture and nursery of that which our nation desires again to become, viz. in spite of Catholicism and Protestantism a great united people. It is true that the intensity of Catholic zeal, bent only upon proselytism, would probably in this way risk being blunted.

It is not open to the law of the State to exclude agreements inconsistent with it on the part of parents as to the religious training of their children, or tyrannical



nically to encroach upon the sanctity of family life. Here especially must the Protestant father be on the look out for the Catholic confessor. At first it would have to be clearly stated, as the Prussian Order in Council intended, that promises on the part of betrothed persons as to the religious bringing up of the children, as given for the most part involuntarily, were forbidden. But still either in the one or other form no obstacle is put in their way. The State can only declare that the compulsory force of law does not attach to them. It was open to people to say, and advice has even been given on our side in that direction, that it is open then to the Protestant clergyman to seek with the same zeal to bring it about, that the Protestant training of all children may be assured. It would, however, be a disagreeable spectacle, if behind every bridal pair of different creeds both the hostile ministers stood, each urging a course conflicting with the other, and causing annoyance, each demanding exclusive rights for his Church. And granting that Catholic methods do not shrink from the matter, the thought does not find favour with us that a modest bride should discuss, or be subjected to a discussion, concerning maternal joys with him from whom she hopes for these even without dwelling upon them in thought.

The Catholic priest must not be compelled to perform the marriage. The State has only to secure that if this duty is refused on any other ground than that of declining to pledge the children, the marriage benediction is to be given by the Protestant minister. Even in the Catholic view this effects a valid marriage. Against what the Catholic partner will have to endure on that account in the confessional, there is no



protection in law. Thus Protestantism here stands plainly at a disadvantage, but it must courageously trust to its innate strength and pass a gentle judgement upon the procedure of the individual priest; for it knows that he is obliged, in accordance with the principles of his Church, to be unjust. It need, however, scarcely be said that we regard as a bad Protestant and half a turncoat one who, in order to gain a wife, promises the children in a body to the Catholic Church, and lets them be trained up in her doctrines, although ecclesiastical punishments, which have now and again been proposed, are not in keeping with Protestant ideas. What then is the Catholic Church's estimate of the Catholic father, who does this for the Protestant wife? The Pope complained of the injustice practised in Russia in forcing the children of every mixed marriage of members of the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox Churches to be brought up in the Greek Church. There exists the same injustice on the part of Catholicism when it has the upper hand there as was practised, and is still constantly attempted, by the Catholicism of the West.

The injustice imposed upon the Catholic priesthood in matters relating to mixed marriages was as glaring as the severity which became a matter of conscience with Protestant pastors in matters connected with divorce, a thing which induced the German government to decide that for the security of the civil validity of marriage it should be contracted in the presence of an official authority (Obligatory Civil Marriage, 1875). This was done by no means with the intention of setting aside Church marriages, but rather with the view of persuading the clergy of both Churches to a gentle and Christian bestowal of the Church's benediction.



## CHAPTER IX

### EXTREME UNCTION

**E**XTREME Unction is the Sacrament of the dying, in conformity with the decision at Trent<sup>1</sup>, ordained by *Christ* and promulgated by *St. James*. According to the usage of the Roman Church it consists in making a cross with olive oil consecrated by a bishop, upon those parts of the body of the dying person which are regarded as the organs of the five senses, by the hand of the priest.

The Scriptural basis is considered to be a general approval, with some individual examples, of the prayer referred to in the following passage: 'Is any among you sick? let him call for the elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of faith shall save him that is sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, it shall be forgiven him. Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The supplication of a righteous man availeth much in its working.'<sup>2</sup> It will be seen that the Epistle of St. James speaks not of a hallowing of death, but of the recovery of the sick by means of a remedy in ordinary use everywhere in ancient times, restricted, however, to a religious intention by the prayer of faith, and in connexion with the miraculous power of healing possessed by the Church of the Apostles, to be adminis-

<sup>1</sup> *S. XIV, de Sac. Extr. Unc. c. 1. [H.]*

<sup>2</sup> *James v. 14 ff.*



tered by the presbyters, in whom, as representing the congregation, this spiritual gift was thought to be specially operative. It should be noted, however, that the Apostle's words at once revert to the general expression, 'confess *one to another*,' and instead of the congregation's office-bearer there comes the 'righteous man'. The power of healing, however great it was, yet did not work infallibly. The Church of the Apostles did indeed receive from the Lord a sense of everlasting life, which has already overcome death, and exclaims: 'O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?'<sup>1</sup> but she did not hold that He had discovered a specific against death, to make her immortal, as a Samaritan Messiah of that time is said to have promised his followers. Cure, as a thing subject to religious conditions in connexion with the forgiveness of sins (just as Christ once cured the lame man and forgave him his sins<sup>2</sup>), being based upon the Jewish view of sickness as the result of a definite transgression, is a connexion of thought for which elsewhere Christ has substituted a higher point of view<sup>3</sup>. Here, however, it is merely set forth as a conjunction which is possible, and frequently happens<sup>4</sup>, but coupled with apostolic faith in the great efficacy of intercessory prayer, not, be it observed, of the priests, but of the brethren one for another<sup>5</sup>.

St. James does not appeal like St. Paul, when the latter mentions the one great Sacrament, to anything received from the Lord. The Schoolmen disputed whether this Sacrament was instituted by Christ Himself or by His Apostles, either through special powers received from Christ to this end, or inwardly taught by

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 55.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. ix. 2 ff.; John v. 14.

<sup>3</sup> John ix. 1-3.

<sup>4</sup> James v. 15.

<sup>5</sup> 1 John v. 16.



the Holy Spirit. The Council of Trent, with some hesitation, adduces the institution by Christ as indicated by St. Mark. In point of fact, St. Mark states both the action in connexion with the preaching of the Gospel and the promise, and to these are related that which in the Epistle of St. James is recommended as an apostolic custom, and not introduced for the first time in his day. By the former writer it is related of the Apostles after their preliminary mission: 'They cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed them.'<sup>1</sup> But on the occasion of our Lord's departure this is the purport of the promise among other miraculous gifts, not for the Apostles only, but for believers in general: 'They shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'<sup>2</sup> It could not be more clearly set forth that here we have presented to us no covenant of everlasting salvation for the dying, but a remedy administered under religious conditions to the sick with a view to their recovery. This remedy, at least when Christ was present, was bestowed even upon such persons as were not yet in any more definite sense His followers. As such a remedy, even after the miraculous gifts of the apostolic Church had gradually ceased, it continued to be held with half belief in the first seven centuries, and in its character of a sacred action is termed by Innocent I<sup>3</sup> a kind of Sacrament. Consecrated by the bishop, its use does not, however, in these cases appear to be conditional upon its being applied by a priest, just as even in the fifth century an oil spring above the bones of a St. Felix of Nola<sup>4</sup> drew thither

<sup>1</sup> Mark vi. 13.<sup>2</sup> Mark xvi. 18.<sup>3</sup> *Ep.* XXV, c. 8. [H.]<sup>4</sup> A priest of Nola in Campania of uncertain date, perhaps in the second part of the third century.



annually for cure pilgrimages of innumerable invalids. Moreover, in the lives of the saints we find many cases of miraculous healing by means of consecrated oil. The Sacrament of the dying throughout the early Church was the Holy Communion. In this sense, as early as the Council of Nicaea<sup>1</sup>, in accordance with an ancient tradition, it is designated the *Viaticum*, i. e. the provision for the journey. In that first enumeration of mysteries, ascribed to *Dionysius* the Areopagite<sup>2</sup>, the name of Sacrament for the dead or dying is given to the sacred usages on behalf of those who had fallen asleep in the Lord, and among these we not unfrequently find anointing mentioned in conformity with ancient custom. This ceremony Apuleius<sup>3</sup>, one would be disposed to say, in a jesting sense, calls the last bath, just as Christ Himself, in the act of love done in His honour, saw an anointing for His burial<sup>4</sup>.

The gradual transition after the eighth century from a miraculous healing to a Sacrament of the dying may have taken place in consequence of the experience that the anointing of those who were seriously ill led more frequently to death than to cure, and now first the name *Extreme* Unction came into vogue. But the original meaning of the usage is still to be seen in the fact that until far into mediaeval times extreme unction was administered before the *viaticum*, and that in the later conception, and even in the decision at Trent<sup>5</sup>, there is still a slight trace of cure as the object, although then and since there was probably no further expectation on the part of any one of recovering

<sup>1</sup> Can. 13. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Acts xvii. 34; the reputed author of treatises which, however, were written much later, probably in the fifth century.

<sup>3</sup> Lucius Apuleius, a Roman Platonic philosopher and rhetorician; b. circ. 125 A. D.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvi. 12.

<sup>5</sup> S. XIV, c. 2. [H.]



health by means of extreme unction. Rather in popular conception and speech to receive extreme unction and to die are fairly coincident notions.

Although this Church teaching had no root in the early orthodox Church, it had nevertheless a precedent in ecclesiastical antiquity, but of a very dubious kind. St. Irenaeus<sup>1</sup> and St. Epiphanius<sup>2</sup> tell of a sect of Gnostics held utterly accursed by the Church, who to the accompaniment of mysterious invocations poured water mixed with oil upon the head of the dying, in order that hereby the spiritual part of the person might pass into the supramundane region unseen and unhindered by the powers that hold sway over the world. This is so far removed from the curing process to which St. James refers, that it is hardly to be derived from this, but perhaps from Eastern mysteries. In any case it owes its character to the dualistic conception of the world entertained by Gnostic fancy. Nevertheless it is the first appearance of extreme unction. How joyfully Catholic theology would seize upon it, if it could find such ancient assured testimony for this custom as appertaining to its own Church! But the Gnostic view, or at any rate the thought which lies at its basis, appears probably to have influenced the way in which the Church of later times regarded the matter, so far as, even after the decree at Trent, one object of extreme unction was deemed to be to strengthen the dying person for the last and most grievous encounter with the devil, who, as he took the place of the gods of paganism, did the same for those powers believed by Gnosticism to hold sway over the world. So too the belief existed all

<sup>1</sup> I. 21. 5. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Bp. of Constantia in Cyprus; his treatise against heresies (xxxvi. 2) is here referred to; d. 403.



through mediaeval times that a devil and an angel stand at the head of the dying, in order to bear downwards or upwards the departing soul according to the last decision made in the conflict with death. This is a mythical emblem of the decision which is involved in the whole previous life of the individual, while in reality the failure of strength belonging to the hour of death often leaves absolutely no room for a conscious and moral conflict.

If then the infallible Church is obviously under a mistake with regard to this Sacrament, deserted alike by Scripture and by tradition, and merely relegated to an origin which has for source an heretical fancy, it is not to be wondered at that among its own theologians, as long as modestly expressed doubt and opposition were able to be current without risk, both these were active. The learned cardinal Cajetan<sup>1</sup> himself, who was sent to convert or ruin the Reformer at Augsburg at the commencement of his work, expressly denied, in his Commentary on the Epistle of St. James, that the Apostle's words could be referred to the Sacrament of extreme unction. The excuse made by Roman theologians is inadequate, that this, as written before the Council of Trent, was therefore pardonable, while since that Council it can hardly be doubted that Christ directly instituted this Sacrament; as if a Council could make facts happen which have not happened and have not been handed down!

Accordingly the judgement pronounced in the Augsburg Apology<sup>2</sup> is as just as it is gentle: 'Confirmation and Extreme Unction are ceremonies received by tradition from the Fathers which the Church has not

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> *Apol. Conf.* VII, p. 201. [H.]



so much as declared necessary to salvation, since they are not commanded by God. Therefore it is not devoid of profit to distinguish between these usages and those above indicated, which have in their support an express command of God and a clear promise of grace.'

Nevertheless the Catholic Church unconsciously obeyed the dictates of its own genius, while it transformed the apostolic tradition, no longer possessed of any living meaning; for cures on the part of a priest through the mere use of olive oil and prayer could only take place under peculiar conditions of mental training. After Baptism was established for all born within Christianity as the rite of consecration upon the threshold of life, it appeared natural that at the close of an individual life as well the blessings of the Church should be set forth by a special Sacrament. The fact that not unfrequently circumstances occur which forbid the further partaking of the Lord's Supper, in the case of a Church that is accustomed to the idea of an effect *ex opere operato*, might strongly recommend a ceremony which can be performed upon a person who is unconscious and already half dead. It is true that the Council of Trent lays more stress upon the moral effect, saying that this anointing, as a grace imparted by the Holy Spirit, exalts the soul of the sick person, and fills it with confidence in the Divine mercy, in order to bear more easily the distresses of sickness and to withstand the assaults of the devil. To that end the Sacraments which blot out sin are accumulated in the case of a sick bed, if it is considered to be leading up to a regular Catholic death. It has a strange appearance that at the very time when the Catholic Church, through its display in the indulgence business, took



a not very deep and serious view of sin, such numerous ways of expiating sin were established in rapid succession. First the dying man makes his confession, and the guilt of all his sins is remitted to him. Then comes the Holy Communion, whereby subsequently the small daily sins are remitted. Lastly, there is extreme unction also as an expiatory power. Therefore the Tridentine resolution on the subject, connected only in words with the passage in St. James, cautiously says that this anointing 'removes transgressions, if there be still any to be expiated, and the residue of sins'. Something of this sort probably was the idea in the letter for his conversion which made the aged Paul of Heidelberg<sup>1</sup> smile even upon his deathbed by the recommendation: 'Reflect, honoured Sir, that it is a good thing to live a Protestant, but to die a Catholic.' The idea might perhaps be that the amount of aid is proportionate to the number of methods. Notwithstanding, the accumulation of means of expiation involves at the same time a depreciation of the effect of each individual Sacrament. Furthermore, solemn observances in connexion with death are made use of in order by the threat of withholding them to extract a recantation from men who, in the course of their public lives, have caused the hierarchy some annoyance. Here also they content themselves with the bare outward rite. Talleyrand<sup>2</sup> and Grégoire<sup>3</sup> were both bishops of the period of the Revolution. The eloquent Grégoire, who, amid all the terrors of an anti-Christian Revolution, avowed his Catholic Christianity, and was in fact a Confessor, was refused by the archbishop of

<sup>1</sup> A rationalist theologian of the Tübingen school.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 119.

<sup>3</sup> Henri Grégoire, bp. of Blois and revolutionist; d. 1831.



Paris the Sacrament of the dying, unless by a recantation of his political career he reconciled himself with the Church. Talleyrand, who made his recantation, was held to be a sheep brought back to the fold.

According to all that we have said above the Romish Church in this matter has but little ground for laying its curse upon a purely historical judgement, which nevertheless it cannot controvert. There can be no doubt that the Protestant upon his deathbed is doing right, when, according to the custom of Christian antiquity, once more, previous to the solemn departure from life, he celebrates the complete union with Christ and Christendom by merely partaking of the highest of the Sacraments, the uncurtailed Holy Communion. It is equally certain that the terrors of death cannot be vanquished by any kind of magic inherent in a particular Sacrament, but that he who is true to his promise shall not taste death eternally. On the contrary, setting aside the pretended institution by Christ and apostolic tradition, the Sacrament of the dying, in the shape which it has once for all assumed in the course of history, may well pass muster as suitable for Catholics. Nay, it also answers to our religious sentiment that the blessing of the Church should be pronounced not only over one dying who is dear to us, but also over the dead at the open grave. It is, however, impossible to maintain the existence of any kind of supernatural effect; the less so as the opportunity of receiving it depends upon so many accidental circumstances. Cavour<sup>1</sup> received extreme unction, also Antonelli<sup>2</sup>, but in the latter case vexatious legal proceedings followed through the unkindness of his blood-relations. Even a continuity with apostolic tradition

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 353.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 85.



is capable of being shown here, if, coupled with a sincere avowal of a gradual change, we take the thought of the early Church, which termed the martyrs' deathday their birthday, and for that matter the thought of the dying Socrates<sup>1</sup> as well, and consider the sacred act as a symbol of the cure of the infirmities of this earthly existence, the consecration for the mysteries of death as also the rising to a higher life.

<sup>1</sup> The famous Greek philosopher, condemned to death for 'impiety' towards the pagan religion of his day; d. B. C. 399.



BOOK III

SUPPLEMENTARY MATTERS







## CHAPTER I

### WORSHIP

CATHOLIC worship, as Luther was conscious even at the time of the bitterest discord, has a noble Christian pedigree, full of symbolical usages, which make it probable that even those which have become unintelligible have an original reasonableness. Who would wish to deny that in these sacred usages millions of believers daily find edification, and have found it for centuries? Moreover, we cannot quarrel with the fact that Christ and the Apostles did not institute this worship, if only in common with clear-sighted Catholics we recognize in the Church the claim to historical development. Nor can we take umbrage at the splendour of this worship, which however is in fact only to be found in those places where the Church is rich; for, little as true devotion needs these externals, why should not the treasures of earth be at the service of the Holy One? But it attaches to the Roman Church as a thing blameworthy that it has set forth the service of God, instead of being a natural expression and nourishment of piety, as a service done to God and a meritorious deed for men, which can therefore be thus performed externally; and that it has both slighted and overlaid with fables the proclamation of the Divine Word.

Many a one perhaps, simply because in the indifferent discharge of his ecclesiastical duties he goes to mass, confesses at Easter, makes a pilgrimage to a wonder-



working image, is laid hold of, though involuntarily, by the power of the sacred action, and draws from it a blessing ; but the Church, while desiring to entice men to the service of God, has become a snare to them in that they, with the idea of setting everything right by acts of this external character, continue without genuine repentance an indifferent course of life, if not a criminal one. How many robbers, pious men in the Catholic sense of the word, have carried on their business in Italy ! Such a robber ideal was to be had for a small sum in the streets of Rome. In a popular book, 'printed this year,' entitled *The Great Marziale*. It was further set forth in the seductive title as 'a terrible drama which relates his birth, his life, and his repentant death, how he saw God's compassion shine above him, and was delivered from hell, although he had murdered father, mother, sister, brother, maid, and manservant, and as captain of 170 bandits was in the habit of murdering a man daily'. He practises the most unnatural crimes. His gang takes possession of a county, where they live 'like the Lutherans'. At length a monk ventures to tackle him. He has already converted one of the robber's mistresses. Marziale forces his way into the church panting for vengeance. The monk confronts him with the words : 'The Son of God bled to procure thee forgiveness. The merciful God has looked down upon thee hitherto. Now entreat His forgiveness. He awaits thee with open arms in heaven.' Behold the Divine miracle ! Marziale falls upon his knees, desires on the spot to make his confession, and is absolved. While a solemn mass is being prepared, the heart of the penitent bursts, and he dies, saying, 'Praised be Jesus Christ !' Thereupon a dove brings from heaven a golden letter, from



which the monk reads aloud that Marziale has been taken up to heaven. Upon this many of the gang desire to make their confession and invoke the Mother of God.

Here there is set forth for this people something even higher than the usual ecclesiastical activity, and nevertheless misleading enough. But he who merely discharges his ecclesiastical duties as a business that has to be got through, at any rate in point of religion stands upon a much lower platform. There is presented here no dogma for us to impeach, but merely an ecclesiastical operation. And nevertheless there is here the dogma which we have already denied, which in this case is first extended to the collective worship of God and becomes really practical—the dogma concerning the Sacraments, that their miraculous efficacy in procuring grace is not lacking, providing only that at the moment of their carrying out a deadly sin does not intervene. How pleasant and seductive it is, is it not? to be always assured anew of one's salvation, and yet to lead a vicious life! The procedure of the Church becomes then very obvious, when it promises an indulgence for the performance of some kind of religious act, and by some sort of arbitrary definition of the indulgence directs the believer to something fanciful, it is true, yet to be attained through definite external actions.

Specially during Holy Week there are to be seen in Rome many people creeping up the so-called holy staircase (*scala santa*) upon their knees. It is held to be the steps trodden by the Redeemer, and moistened with His blood, leading to Pilate's Praetorium, and to have been presented to Rome by St. Helena<sup>1</sup>, the

<sup>1</sup> Flavia Julia Helena, who made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, circ. 325.



mother of Constantine. The steps of white marble are in good order, and above them is a wooden casing for preservation, and to make the climbing more convenient. There is not the remotest historical notice available nor the smallest likelihood that in the fate which befell Jerusalem, when not one stone was left upon another<sup>1</sup>, this insignificant thing should have been preserved and brought to Rome. That procession of climbers has an uncanny appearance, like a meandering, endless worm. But an old papal Bull, raked up and confirmed by Pius VII, guarantees nine years' indulgence for each step of the staircase thus mounted. Even Luther in 1511 climbed up, and relates that while doing so he seemed to hear a voice behind him, saying: 'The just shall live by his faith,'<sup>2</sup> as yet unknown to him as the Gospel of his life's mission. It is true that the Bull makes the blessing contingent upon repentance, and on having a regard to the death of the Saviour. But while a penitent heart, deep in meditation upon the sufferings of our Lord, has no preliminary need of climbing up a staircase in order to obtain the right sort of indulgence, viz. the forgiveness of sins, it is apparent that, owing to the mathematical exactitude with which the amount of the indulgence is defined, the legendary stairs themselves, and the unusual manner of mounting them, the thoughts are fixed upon external things exclusively, and another than Luther will not readily hear that whisper of life through faith. On the other hand many, on reaching the top, will multiply the twenty-eight steps by nine, in case they have got so far in the first four rules of arithmetic, and will rejoice in what they have

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Hab. ii. 4; cp. Rom. i. 17, Gal. iii. 11, Heb. x. 38.



acquired. Moreover, Pius VII expressly observes that this indulgence can be applied also to souls in Purgatory, while it is undeniable that these latter cannot appropriate the indulgence in a conscious manner or one that affects the moral conduct.

Even simple and natural evidences of religious feeling contain, through such arbitrary promises of the Church, a false and misleading addition. The noble ruins of the Roman Colosseum are consecrated to the Church, not so much by the little chapels stocked with mean pictures, the ordinary indication of stations of the Cross, which stretch along the edge of the arena and are lost in the gigantic structure behind them, but rather by means of a simple wooden Cross erected in the middle. Nowhere has Christianity had more right to erect this token of victory than upon this spot, consecrated as it is by the blood of so many martyrs in conflict with wild beasts of the desert. Its gentle token of redemption and of peace stands where formerly the populace of Rome and the Empire in grim majesty gazed upon the sanguinary spectacle which dealt with human lives. It was an ancient pagan custom to do honour to the representations of their idols by kissing, and it has always been the fashion with southern nations to testify reverence by kisses. There then they kiss the Cross, a small iron Cross let into the wall at the entrance of the amphitheatre, as well as the wooden one in the midst of the arena. Even to my Protestant eyes it was a touching spectacle when on Good Friday they were prostrate on their knees, close to each other and quickly succeeding one another, country people, shepherds in their goatskins from the mountains, elegantly dressed ladies, soldiers and beggars, all kissing the



stem of the Cross, one in their pious humility. But above the small Cross built into the wall there stands the inscription: 'He who kisses this Cross' (without adding any sort of condition) 'obtains one hundred and forty days' indulgence.' I always regarded it as a blessing bestowed by God, every time that by day or on a moonlight night I entered this ruined Colosseum, where the hostility of the spiritual powers, that in succession exercised sway over the world, in their full power confronted One Opponent. Further, it is undoubtedly very convenient to free oneself by means of a kiss from a torture, which is long even when merely measured by days. But does not such externalism in course of conduct and in gain bear down like a cold blast upon the warmth of devotion, and destroy a good deal of its bloom?

*Pilgrimages* also are as a rule undertaken in order to obtain a particular indulgence or the fulfilment of a prayer. I do not trouble to adduce the usual reasons why in the earlier part of the nineteenth century pilgrimages were absolutely forbidden, e. g. in Bavaria, viz. that at times they resulted in acts of licentiousness which certainly present themselves in an aspect glaringly diverse from a religious one, while it may be said on the other side that opportunity is hardly lacking for them elsewhere as well. Or people have counted up exactly how many working days have been lost in this way by that part of the population who take special pleasure in such journeys. Doubtless, since Paradise was lost, God has imposed labour upon us all, be it with the hands, or the head and heart, and He has also bestowed His blessing upon labour. But man is not meant to be merely a machine for working. Christianity decidedly aims



at raising mankind's head so as to be free to pursue their eternal needs, and, in the development of the law of the Sabbath when rightly understood, it has for their benefit coordinated with labour every innocent joy. Almost every one who has the means desires nowadays to undertake a journey for his recreation or instruction. Pilgrimage is nothing but popular travel with a religious aim to a sacred place, whose value consists in a pious tradition. But the popular conception favoured by the Church that at such and such a place a saint, the Mother of God, the Deity Himself, desire more than elsewhere to be worshipped, and more readily attend to the wishes of the faithful, is preposterous, and presumes the slenderest conception of the circumstances of the glorified saint himself. Such superstition is opposed to the prophecy which is equivalent to a serious precept, that has been so often disregarded and pushed into the background by the Romish Church: 'the time is coming, and is already come, when ye shall worship neither on this nor on that mountain.'<sup>1</sup>

The faithful person is not hereby excluded from being moved to devotion in a particular locality, and feeling himself nearer to a particular saint, and to the Deity Himself. There is a beautiful expression applied to secular matters, the truth of which we have many times experienced in life: 'The spot which a good man has trodden is consecrated: after a hundred years his grandson hears the echo of his words and deeds.' Wherefore should it not also be of avail in regard to religion, if this good man, our neighbour, has also become a saint? Why should not the repairing to the place where he lived,

<sup>1</sup> See John iv. 21.



on the festival of rest from daily cares and interests, be a time for obtaining a devotional collectedness of temper?

The sacredness of the pilgrimage is in most cases dependent upon the place's possession of the saint's body. Even a Protestant cannot without emotion stand at the simple monumental slabs in the Schlosskirche at Wittenberg<sup>1</sup>. There he thinks that he feels a breath of Luther's spirit, although on reflection he is aware that it is merely in his own fancy that it is so, and, as he buries himself in one of the Reformer's writings with its deep thoughts, he stands nearer to him, as speaking now with the living, the immortal, and not with the dead. The erection of an altar over the grave of a man of lofty merits as regards the Church, in whose life its spirit was purely and powerfully set forth, has of itself a somewhat strong savour of paganism, i.e. of the deification of a man. Athens moreover erected an altar over the ashes of the unfortunate King of Thebes<sup>2</sup>, who at length was reconciled with the gods. Sparta erected an altar with the dying lion above the bones of the three hundred who fell at Thermopylae in obedience to the law<sup>3</sup>.

Nevertheless in this paganism there is so much that is human that we feel the force of the appeal to hark back to that idea of loving remembrance, which is its characteristic intention.

It is not unlikely if a community have sent from the midst of them a loved martyr to heaven, if an

<sup>1</sup> Where Luther and Melancthon are buried.

<sup>2</sup> Oedipus, who after long wanderings arrived at the grove of the Eumenides (Fates) near Colonus in Attica, and was honoured by Theseus in his misfortune. According to an oracle, the Eumenides removed him from the earth, and no one was permitted to approach his tomb.

<sup>3</sup> The narrow pass between Thessaly and Locris, famous for its defence under Leonidas against the army of Xerxes, B.C. 480.



honoured bishop, a Church teacher, or the founder of an Order has been laid in the grave, that the spot would be kept in the memory of this community or society from generation to generation, although the tempest, which has at times passed over nations, has also blown away and effaced many a local memory, where one should have least expected it. For the Christian community at Jerusalem the tomb of the Risen Lord Himself sank into obscurity, so that it was not till after the time of Constantine that it was considered to have been rediscovered and authenticated by means of a miracle. Parallel good fortune at any rate in this respect befell the devotees of St. Francis. Although immediately after his decease two stately memorial churches, one above the other, were erected over the spot where his body was laid, and in the midst of an Order which daily sounded his praises, the place was nevertheless forgotten, and after long search was not rediscovered till 1818 upon very dubious authority.

As a result of the Crusades numberless bones of saints with definite historical names attached, in most cases devoid of all historical guarantee, were conveyed to the West, a regular resurrection of the dead, but not to a really new life. Since for the proper hallowing of an altar the body of a saint or martyr was considered needful, the Catacombs of Rome furnished an inexhaustible supply of these articles, obtained as gifts or by purchase; while in the spot itself every place of burial, upon which a palm was depicted or in which was found a vessel with reddish marks of a dried-up fluid, passed for a spot sacred to a martyr, although the learned Mabillon<sup>1</sup> long since showed that the palm is merely the early Christian symbol of immortality,

<sup>1</sup> See p. 60.



and that the vessel contains not the blood of the person executed, but wine of the Lord's Supper bestowed upon the dead as a protection against demons. As for these deceased persons, even if the name assigned in each case by means of the Roman christening of relics were more certain than those of the three kings at Cologne, there exists in most cases absolutely nothing to identify them with the Christian community, and not even a legend dealing with their life has been framed. On the other hand in the case of celebrated saints, owing to the delight that was taken in them, their bones were sometimes with Christian benevolence distributed among separate churches, and on the morning of the Resurrection they will be obliged to collect their members from as many different places as the soldiers of Napoleon's grand army. Quite lately, through French intervention, an arm of St. Augustine was brought back from Pavia, if his body was indeed preserved there, to his native town of Bona. Moreover the body, or at all events the head, of celebrated deceased persons presented itself in two or three specimens, the genuineness in each case being guaranteed by miraculous cures! We have no right to hold all these to be deceptions, although some of them have shown themselves to be such. But an historian who was a Roman Catholic, though not exactly a believer<sup>1</sup>, gave it as his opinion that if the bones of dogs were handled with the same faith as those of saints, they would bring about the same effect. Some of these sacred relics attest themselves by an annually repeated miraculous spectacle, like the blood of *St. Januarius*, which liquefies on

<sup>1</sup> Peter Pompanazzo, one of the Italian 'humanists', who sought to combine Platonism with Christianity; d. 1526.



his festival day. It is not yet made known how this chemical artifice is accomplished, but it is certain that in former days other saints as well in Naples proved themselves as such to the people by their blood trickling out again, and that St. Januarius sometimes, as it appeared on political grounds, refused to let his blood flow, but notwithstanding promptly yielded to hostile threats directed against the archbishop. Lastly, it is certain, and it may be heard three times yearly by every one who can stand something of an ear-piercing display, that before the liquefaction takes place, Neapolitan ladies, who term themselves the cousins of the saint, in their intercessions for the purpose of mollifying him, raise a shrieking which sounds as though a hundred old women were squabbling and scuffling. Moreover the Carmelite church there possesses a crucifix, upon which in former times every year the hair grew, in order that on a fixed day it might be cut off with great ceremony. Many deceptions have been discovered, as having been too coarsely carried on even for the people of the time, as in the case of the skull of St. Anna, the grandmother of our Saviour, which was solemnly fetched to Bern in 1516. Soon afterwards the news came from Lyons that the body was to be found still entire, and that the sacristan had given to the envoy from Bern only an ordinary skull from the charnel house. People in Rome are sufficiently enlightened to console themselves in such cases with the saying of Leibnitz : ‘ Since it is only a matter of pious sentiment, it makes no matter, if it should happen on some one occasion that relics considered to be genuine are spurious.’<sup>1</sup>

The reproach, which Arnobius in his *Apology* for

<sup>1</sup> *Syst. theol.* p. 198. [H.]



Christianity brought against paganism, was soon afterwards found to exist in the heart of the Church. The distinction which St. Augustine<sup>1</sup> was still able to point out between the worship paid to deified men of the pagan world and the attitude of the Church towards the saints, viz. that no temples or altars were erected to them, was soon broken through. A regular worship of the dead came into existence in the Catholic Church, as formerly in Egypt while still heathen, and even at the present day in China; in the latter case at any rate consecrated by family ties. They decked out the skeletons as though they were living men. At each of the numerous altars in the lonely monastery church of Ettal<sup>2</sup>, there stands the skull of a saint furnished with precious stones, which however, probably since the French occupation of this place, have become more like the saints whose adornment they constitute. In the church of St. Mary of the Angels at Rome there stood the skeleton of a certain St. Felix, clothed, and with a wreath of flowers, kneeling upon one knee, holding in one hand a palm branch, and in the other a bottle with his own blood. In the chapel of the dead at Chiavenna, at the foot of the Splügen, the priest showed me with exultant pride the arms of the Pope and of Austria put together out of skulls and bones. My heart, however, is too German for me to be able to describe *both* these works of art, considering their material, as being appropriate models of that which they represented. Of late the austere aspect of the sacred bone is covered over, while a wax envelope sets forth the member in question.

Next after the bones of the dead there come other memorials which, revered as relics, appertain more

<sup>1</sup> *De Civ. Dei*, XXII. 10. [11.]

<sup>2</sup> A village near Oberammergau.



to life and serve to remind of it. In mediaeval times delight in these was so intense that, even before St. Elizabeth was canonized, her body had the hair, ear-flaps, and the very nipples of her breasts cut off, Catholic zeal thus presaging the fate which her bones were to suffer from Protestant barbarity. It is nevertheless very human to hold as precious some kind of memorial of one we have loved and lost, or of one who has been immortalized. The betrothal ring which Luther placed upon the finger of the runaway nun is also preserved as a relic. In fact a considerable number of Protestant families consider that they possess it as a noble treasure and a cherished heirloom, inasmuch as in former days betrothal rings were freely made after that model. The case can probably be no better with respect to the originality of most of the relics of this kind which are exhibited for adoration in Catholic churches, even apart from impossible things, whose transitory existence in the Middle Ages is perhaps shown forth by a jest which Crusaders brought home with them for the edification of faithful souls—for at that time, when superstition was at home, there used to be a game carried on with it, sometimes saucy, sometimes humorous—such as a rung of Jacob's ladder, the root of Jesse, a feather from the wing of the Archangel Michael, fallen from him in his conflict with the dragon, Moses' horns, the stone of which Christ said that the builders had rejected it, the thorn in St. Paul's flesh, a ray from the star of the wise men, down to the most modest petrified relics of the ass upon which our Lord made His entry with the palm branches. These some rogue brought to the pious abbess of Fretelsheim from the Holy Land. Of another sort the spuriousness is not exactly self-



evident, however great the faith must be which accepts the genuineness as proven. Such are the swaddling clothes of Jesus, shirts of St. Joseph, tears of the Saviour at Lazarus' grave, milk of the Virgin. The speeches in the English Parliament are not altogether historical records, but a few years ago a learned Member of Parliament, in answer to a charge of slander, established the fact that at the present time there are eight churches in which we find preserved small bottles reputed to contain the Blessed Virgin's milk. Apart from all hesitation as to the trustworthiness of the guarantee, let one distinct thought be bestowed upon the actual situation, in which this first gift of nature and of maternal love was taken forsooth from her child and poured into a bottle! Nevertheless, belief in frequently occurring relics such as these may be founded on a misconception similar to that relating to the Holy Coat at Trier. In the neighbourhood of Bethlehem there lies a grotto, whose stone, being of the nature of gypsum, is sold in small specimens to pilgrims, in accordance with the legend that Mary, on the murder of the Innocents, first fled to take refuge in this grotto, and sprinkled her milk upon the wall, in order not to administer to the Divine Child nourishment which had become unwholesome owing to fright.

Protestantism rejected devotion paid to relics, first on account of the abuses and fables attached to them, of a kind to make the devil an object of ridicule, and secondly because they were not supported by the Word of God and were prone to seduce from the right faith<sup>1</sup>. Catholic theology finds Biblical proof, or at all events traces, of the cult of relics<sup>2</sup> in the case of the woman with the issue of blood who found a cure in touching

<sup>1</sup> *Art. Smalc.* p. 310. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Perrone, *Tom.* vi. § 84. [H.]



the clothes of our Lord<sup>1</sup>, in the handkerchiefs of St. Paul<sup>2</sup>, even in the shadow of St. Peter<sup>3</sup>, to which things curative powers were attributed. This issue of healing powers from a living man merely through the medium of something belonging to him is nevertheless something different. The first case is unique in its way, and is a mystery to us. The other two are merely related to make intelligible the reverence with which the two Apostles on one occasion were surrounded. They only testify to an excess in the popular Jewish belief, and mention somewhat indefinitely the result aimed at. Nevertheless, the use made of the handkerchiefs taken from the Apostle of the Gentiles certainly harmonizes with that made of many ecclesiastical relics, and in the Gospel of the Childhood, whose origin falls not later than the second century, the swaddling clothes of Jesus appear distinctly as having power to drive away demons.

But the religious guarding of rare relics rather has its precedent earlier in ancient Greece, where Pausanias<sup>4</sup> in his time discovered rare objects, such as the knife appointed for sacrificing Iphigeneia<sup>5</sup>, an egg laid by Leda<sup>6</sup>, the remains of the clay from which Prometheus<sup>7</sup> formed men. Mohammedanism, too, does not lack devotion to relics. In a mosque near Mecca even the leg of mutton is shown which said to the prophet, although vainly: 'Eat me not, I am poisoned.' In particular, Buddhism, elsewhere also

<sup>1</sup> Matt. ix. 20 ff.<sup>2</sup> Acts xix. 12.<sup>3</sup> Acts v. 15.<sup>4</sup> A noted Greek geographer and writer on art.<sup>5</sup> Daughter of Agamemnon, who sought, by attempting her death, to obtain a favourable wind for his fleet in the Trojan expedition.<sup>6</sup> According to Greek tradition mother of Helena of Troy and of Castor and Pollux.<sup>7</sup> The mythological son of the Titan Japetus.



outdoing Catholicism, possesses rich treasures of this sort, since there are also chapels built over the shadow, not indeed of St. Peter, but of Buddha. The Council of Trent did not direct that devotion should be paid to particular relics, but gave a general approval to this devotion, and condemned its opponents<sup>1</sup>. Inasmuch as at the same time it forbade the acceptance of fresh relics for a church without inquiry of the bishop belonging to it, or in more important cases without taking counsel of the Pope, and inasmuch as in the absence of such permission miracles are not to happen, or at least not to be believed to take place, in this way that which would merely feed ridicule is pretty well avoided; but it is extremely seldom that hierarchical authorities have determined to withdraw relics, however dubious their origin might be, so long as they attracted the faithful. Almost always the Church looked on and acquiesced, when by means of relics and promises of miracles superstition was aroused and trifled with. As late as for the war of the Sonderbund in 1847<sup>2</sup> the Jesuits sold miracle-working medals, which were said to secure against thrust and bullet. As early as the time of the 'Escalade of Geneva'<sup>3</sup> medals were found upon the prisoners with the inscription: 'He who carries thee shall not come to harm either by land or water, either by the sword or by fire.' At that time the Calvinists of Geneva carried out the grim joke of hanging three of these prisoners. All the hosts that bled, all the pictures of Mary that winked with their eyes, and that shed tears or blood, how they are retained and cherished by the hierarchy, as long as a people is found ready to believe on them! In the

<sup>1</sup> *Sessio XXV.* [H.]

<sup>2</sup> See p. 131.

<sup>3</sup> When the Savoyards were repulsed in 1602.



tendency of a Catholic population to seek edification from such things rather than from the Word of God in Holy Scripture, a sensuous religion reveals itself, and in the tendency of the clergy to glorify those sacred objects, and above all the Papacy itself, with fables which are termed legends, there is shown indifference to truth. Papal letters of ratification for something desirable or sufficiently recommended were also to be obtained in our time, although the Pope could know for certain no more about the matter than I did. Gregory XVI by a Brief confirmed the appearance of the Holy Virgin for the conversion of the Jew at Ratisbon. Pius VII did the same for the discovery of the bones of St. Francis, although the only evidence was a sarcophagus discovered without any inscription or carving; and the twenty-eight coins to be found within it say but little for the holy beggar who had an extreme aversion in life to the defilement caused by filthy lucre. He who is accustomed to think clearly will take up the same position towards such confirmatory records, by means of which, according to Roman opinion, every doubt is at an end, as Montesquieu did in Rome, when Benedict XIV, in accordance with a long-standing indication of his favour, granted him permission to eat meat on a Friday. He accepted the permission with gratitude, but when it came to the matter of paying the government tax for the document made out to this effect, the author of *L'Esprit des Loix* declined, and said: 'The Pope is an honourable man; I take him at his word.'

At times there was to be seen proceeding through the streets of Rome a grand carriage, before which all give way or kneel down, as if it were the chariot of



Hertha<sup>1</sup>. The mysterious figure which sits there is the *Bambino*, an ancient representation in wood of the Child Christ, the treasured possession of the church of the Franciscans on the Capitol, which is supplied in cases of mortal sickness, and for a specified liberal consideration is drawn to the place required, in accordance with the popular belief that it applies its miraculous power to the *saving of life or easing of death*. It will be seen that there is thus provided for faith a security in the shape of an alternative, which cannot readily be at fault.

The exhibition of the Holy Coat at Trier in 1844 brought, it is true, to the Catholic Church the glory connected with masses of people flocking thither and paying their devotions, but as far as numbers were concerned this was accompanied—and that in the case of a Church which sets such store by numbers—by a great defection in the countries where the population was of mixed religion, and it brought also the bitter after-taste of severe and irrefutable criticism. We cannot say that there are as many as twenty churches which assert the possession of this Holy Coat, so that in this way a complete and abundant wardrobe would be forthcoming for Him Who forbade His disciples to have two coats<sup>2</sup>. Many, however, of these contented themselves with a fragment of the Holy Coat; thus, it is plain, setting themselves absolutely in contradiction with the thought which led this coat without seam, not parted by the soldiers, but unrent and assigned by lot<sup>3</sup>, to be from an early date a significant symbol to the Church of its indissoluble unity. It is certain,

<sup>1</sup> Also called Nerthus; according to Tacitus (*Germania*, c. 40) a German goddess of fertility and growth.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 10; Luke iii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> John xix. 24.



however, that the Lateran Church itself in Rome exhibited a specimen of this miraculous Coat, that the church of Argenteuil has since the twelfth century possessed a second specimen, and produced papal Briefs in vindication of its genuineness. It is certain that a learned ecclesiastic of Trier as late as the year 1106 speaks with much interest of this Coat without seam, but as to be found at Jerusalem. If a few years later it makes its appearance at Trier, and is asserted to have been there since the time of Constantine, gradually embellished with a rich adornment of legends widely differing among themselves, it is accordingly highly probable, presuming its innocent origin, that it is only a vesture which on festival days was wrapped around a statue of Christ, just as at St. Peter's the ancient bronze statue of St. Peter is clothed with the papal pallium on his festival. This vesture, which accordingly received the name of our Lord's Coat, was by a most fortunate chance woven and dedicated in Jerusalem. In the same way as early as the sixth century materials woven there, and consecrated at the pillar of our Lord's scourging, were made into articles of various kinds connected with His life or sufferings, and became favourite matters of trade. On the occasion of its exhibition our Lord's Coat guaranteed its genuineness by miraculous cures. The first case was the temporary fancy of a poor excited girl belonging to a family of high ecclesiastical position. Thereupon out of the thousands who sought aid there, according to the official testimony of physicians, eighteen actually obtained it. As for the others, as the triumphant historian of this pilgrimage with prudent modesty observes, 'certainly by far the largest number had to submit themselves to the



will of God.' If they really believe that a piece of clothing, not used, be it observed, to cover the poor, but, as they assert, by being looked upon or touched, brings about instant cures, surely compassion on the part of the priests should require them never to withdraw such miraculous means of deliverance from suffering, and especially from believing humanity. But the priesthood is crafty enough, by means of seasonable withdrawal and infrequency of exhibiting, to conserve faith and due solemnity. In the same year the Holy Coat was again concealed behind the altar, and our contemporaries will hardly obtain another sight. At the general assembly of the Catholic union at Aachen Count Galen made special boast that that city possessed the insignia of rule belonging to the Empress of heaven ; consisting, as far as I know, of a white cotton dress of hers and swaddling clothes of Jesus. In Rome annually on the high festivals, especially in St. Peter's and generally in the evening, on a signal given by a little bell, relics are exhibited. No great impression is made. A part of those walking about in the great church fall on their knees with bowed head, and cross themselves. The others, even if they look up with opera glasses to the lofty tribune from which the treasure is shown, see nothing more than the shining vessel which is their repository.

Perhaps it may only be some simple peasants in Trier who have prayed in their wonted fashion : ' O Holy Coat, intercede for me ! ' Official wisdom, taking some account of the education of this epoch, warns us that the Holy Coat is intended merely to remind us of Him Who once wore it. But to this end He instituted not His Coat but His Holy Communion, and each of His words which reverberates with effect through the



centuries, when rightly explained and applied, would better consecrate this memory in the way that He intended than gazing at an old piece of clothing, even if it were really His. At Rome reverence is still paid to the footprint, which Christ, appearing there to His fleeing Apostle, impressed upon a piece of rock<sup>1</sup>. On the Mount of Olives too a footprint of this kind marks the spot of the Ascension. The permanent traces of Himself, which Christ has stamped upon the history of the world, are of a very different order.

The pilgrimage to the Holy Coat, as regards the manner of its carrying out as a solemnity following upon the conflict with reference to mixed marriages, was simply intended as a demonstration against the Protestant government; while the crowds, perhaps amounting to a million, were pointed to, who, proceeding thither, as they did, at the word of command, might have also been made use of otherwise. The brilliant days of the pilgrimage to Lourdes were brought about by the clerical party, who simply made arrangements for themselves to hold sway over France. As a consequence the so-called *Culturkampf* could not be altogether without what received the appellation, not complimentary but not unmerited, of a Madonna-lightness in the head. I grant that it cannot be proved that the Madonna, conceived as Ruler of the world in the Catholic sense, is incapable of appearing, but it is certain that such an appearance has up to the present time never credibly established itself for unprejudiced persons. It is certain that, little known as it was,

<sup>1</sup> In the small church on the Appian Way, named 'Domine, quo vadis?' from the legend that St. Peter, fleeing from a martyr's death at Rome, there met his Master, and said, 'Lord, whither goest Thou?' On receiving the answer, 'I go to be crucified again,' the Apostle, ashamed of his weakness, returned.



especially to the early Church and even to the Middle Ages with all their faith, it never was manifested in a decisive manner at an historically important moment. Lastly, it is certain that as the result of such an appearance, there never was to be heard a saying which from its religious import could be compared even afar off with the sayings which in their fullness of meaning have been left us by her exalted Son. The priest of Marpingen, to whom Prince Radziwill brought a golden cross from the Holy Father, was indeed convinced that the Virgin actually appeared to the three children<sup>1</sup>, but of the fourteen other children, who said subsequently that they saw her, he declared that he knew nothing. Moreover, against all other competing appearances, particularly in the neighbourhood, he sides with us in the attitude of critical caution. Moreover, it cannot be proved that departed spirits do not bustle about among the living, and are even able to answer in writing our questions under the table, as is believed by many thousands in the American Society of giddy spiritualists. Only it is certain that these answers have brought nothing fresh, but much that is simple, from the other world, and that the spirit capturer Slade, for example, was at once recognized on German soil as a conjurer.

Since the time of St. Francis a considerable number of persons have been noted as reported to have been graced by the wounds of the Crucified Saviour. I deemed the mendicant of Assisi, as genial as he was pious, to have been really marked with the *stigmata*, and in seven impressions of my Church History indicated him as such, since this record has come down to us from those most closely connected with him.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 117.



I explained it to myself by the plastic effect which sympathetic feeling, revelling in the wound-prints of our Lord, produced upon an utterly disordered frame. The Bull of Gregory IX, canonizing the deceased when only two years had elapsed, and adducing from close personal acquaintances matters natural and supernatural which justify this canonization, and yet silent with regard to the wound-prints, was the first thing which puzzled me, and led me to institute a more minute inquiry into the historical evidence, which, as it turned out, could not hold water. We know from Catharine of Siena's<sup>1</sup> own letters that she was convinced that she bore these marks upon her virgin person, and had a lively recollection of the mortal pain which accompanied her reception of them; but they were invisible to herself, and were never seen by mortal eye. Among our contemporaries Catharina Emmerich, the sometime nun of Dülmen<sup>2</sup>, apparently gave moral guarantees that there was nothing made up about her bleeding and shining wound-marks. Nevertheless dubious reports were disseminated about her, and Clemens Brentano, a leading witness who sat beside her bed for a year and chronicled her fancies, bearing testimony to facts of the most incredible kind, was after all a poet. In the case of Luise Lateau<sup>3</sup> there was adequate evidence of the fact of bleeding wound-marks, but the clergy about her did not make up their minds to establish as a matter of history, by means of observation conducted by experts, the circumstances alleged as miraculous, and the description

<sup>1</sup> See p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> In Westphalia, not far from Münster.

<sup>3</sup> A Belgian girl, born at Bois d'Haine in 1850. She formed the subject of medical professors' investigations at Louvain; d. 1883.



which the founders of *Germania*<sup>1</sup> gave as eyewitnesses, that out of the openings in the crown of thorns a stream of blood flowed over her face, is, according to other descriptions given by believers, not devoid of poetic licence. Belonging to the time of St. Francis there is testimony to the effect that the Marquess Monteferrando<sup>2</sup> bore on his body the wound-marks of Christ, while on Fridays he pierced them with nails so that they bled, not for the purpose of a fraudulent exhibition, but as an imitation in pious memory of the sufferings of our Lord. A poor girl in Zug copied this, by way of miracle indeed, but merely in order thereby to obtain admittance to a convent, and while in prison drew blood with a hair pin. Since the Swiss even now see no humour in the matter, she was merely subjected to a birching in accordance with a judicial sentence.

The medical assertion that by means of the penitential girdle, specially recommended by Liguori for the mortification of the passions, and by the binding of a mere cord round the loins, with the accompaniment of fasting, cupping, and lancing, voluntary blood-letting might be induced in the case of tender bodies—the mention of such crime in connexion with the Solemnity of the Crucified One is surely a matter for no more than a passing reference.

On Good Friday there takes place in Rome the devotion of the Cross. We do not deny that He is intended Who died upon the Cross for us; but by means of localizing the personal and spiritual in an external thing the mass of Catholics are wont to make what is external and purely natural an object of external worship. It is an echo of that most degraded

<sup>1</sup> A German newspaper in the Roman Catholic interest.

<sup>2</sup> circ. 1230.



form of religion, which is called fetichism. The Reformation called it an idolatrous worship of the creature. In the Reformation period theology was in the main of the opinion that the Cross was to be venerated with the devotion appertaining to the Deity alone, a thing which later became the subject of a controversy. In the consecration of the oil for the various sacramental objects on Maundy Thursday there is contained the liturgical presumption that the olive oil in its natural condition is possessed by Satan, who is to be driven out by exorcism in order that the Holy Spirit may forthwith dwell there. There we have still in full the modes of representation in their extreme form, such as dominated the Middle Ages. Nature, on the occasion of every desire to taste its joys, is possessed by an evil spirit, but the individual object in nature, the fruit of the olive, without any sort of Divine promise to this effect by means of the magical utterance of the priest, becomes the dwelling of the Holy Spirit, and is deified.

Alongside of such survival of paganism Jewish legality shows itself in the prescribed fasts. Christ in this matter had disregarded the custom and expectation of His people, and laid down the principle which put an end to any religious significance attaching of itself to the prohibition of food; saying that it is not that which enters into the man that defiles him. Since Western customs and the needs of the people are no longer in consonance with the Church's directions as to fasting, it became customary that before the prescribed time the bishop should publish in a Brief on the subject dispensations of various sorts. This document accordingly has the aspect of a bill of fare, as it adduces every sort of meat, eggs, melted fat, rich vegetables,



and sauces, which on certain days of the fasting period are permitted or prohibited. In former times such dispensations were sold in Rome at prices more or less fixed. At the commencement of the Reformation in Switzerland a Lucerne man remonstrated thus with one from Zürich: 'You are doing wrong in eating meat in Lent.' The Zürich man answers: 'But in your place too you are eating sundry kinds of food, which are quite as much forbidden as meat.' The Lucerne man said: 'Yes, but we have bought leave from the Pope.' To this the Zürich man replied: 'So have we bought the meat from the butcher. The matter is as long as it is broad. If the one is right, the other is reasonable.'

It is well known that the *sermons* of the Middle Ages abounded to a large extent in miraculous legends, so as to keep up all the magical claims of the hierarchy together with the superstition answering to them. Protestant opposition and the general rise in education have reduced the extent of this. The distinction has remained that in Catholic worship the essential thing is the mass, in the Protestant Church the sermon. It is not as though the power of language was not recognized in the Catholic Church. She had had great ecclesiastical orators, who understood how to move the heart of a nation; but where they have not been led simply through the neighbourhood of Protestant opposition to a regular Sunday sermon, preaching appears merely as a matter of individual talent, of high festivals, and of Lent. In the Pope's three great parish churches no pulpit at all is erected. The Popes have long ceased to preach, and there was great surprise when Pius IX, who knew how to speak with a very powerful voice, at the time when the loud rejoicings of a people whose hopes were boundless still drew him



on, nevertheless once mounted the pulpit of his friend Ventura, in order to thank the Roman populace in a few words for their hearty New Year's wishes. The Council of Trent exhorted the bishops to preach diligently, or at any rate to nominate qualified preachers. The German episcopate, having as a consequence of the Revolution fallen from their princely dignity, took it in hand for the first time to do both.

The preaching of Catholicism is too much concentrated into the six weeks of Lent. At that time there are summoned to the great cities, especially of peoples of Latin origin, distinguished preachers, of whom there is always a supply to be had from the Jesuits and Dominicans, and also from the Capucines, just as in the season immediately before this distinguished artistes in singing are in demand. Preaching then forms a separate service, with nothing to introduce it, and with no congregational singing and no pronouncing of a blessing to close it. In large high-vaulted churches there is stretched for acoustic purposes as far as the opposite pillars a curtain, under which the hearers assemble upon a few benches and cane chairs brought by the people themselves, of the kind that are hired in Paris for a sou each, and in Rome are obtained from a female official, a sort of church mendicant. There is no question there of a whole congregation taking part and filling the church. The Lent preacher daily mounts the pulpit. Thus he must have his whole stock of sermons ready, or at least have thought them out. They are not specially penitential sermons. They deal with many sides of religious and daily life. According to the method of preaching customary in Rome there is no



particular text of Scripture made the basis, but in most cases the sermon has no lack of passages from the Bible, which are adduced from the Vulgate, but also as a rule translated into the mother tongue. It cannot be but that the eloquence of a preacher endowed with talents, who is not acquainted with the needs of a particular congregation, who, in fact, does not see such a one before him, should, especially when we consider the vivacity of a southern people, appear to the dweller in the north theatrical in springing from the gentlest minor key to the thundering utterances of doom. This is a prominent feature, and comes out thoroughly inartificially. So it is customary at the Lent sermons in Rome before the conclusion with its heightened rhetoric to make a pause, in which are collected alms for the poor (this being done there also by means of the troublesome bell-purse), and the sermon of the next day is announced somewhat in this fashion: 'To-morrow I will speak of the tears of the Holy Magdalene. Present yourselves in goodly number, gentlemen (although most of those there are women). You will not regret it, for it will be extraordinarily interesting.' We may add that at Christmas time in the Franciscan Church on the Capitol children are set to declaim regular sermons in honour of the Child Christ.

The slightness of the ceremony attendant upon the sermon is connected with the fact that the whole obligation of worship concentrates itself in the *mass*, which every priest, if it be at all possible, has to say daily, and all the faithful to hear daily, when this can be done. If the Heidelberg Catechism terms the Roman mass an idolatrous service, inasmuch as from its dogmatic standpoint it condemns the adoration of



the host, yet a less one-sided judgement with regard to the religious significance of an act of worship will be compelled, on the supposition that personal faith is exercised in it, to take another course. I have not held a low view of the mass as a constituent part of worship. Nevertheless, even as looked at from the Catholic standpoint, as soon as the matter comes to be one concerning definite ideas, the mass is merely the memorial of the Sacrifice of the dying Christ, and the contemplation of His presence; the latter being attained through the imagination, for the bodily eye only sees the host. However justified and significant this thought is as a portion of Christian doctrine, it is after all merely the one foundation thought as set against all the riches included in Christian teaching and love, as preaching on the basis of God's Word is bound to proclaim these with endless applications to the thousand relationships of actual life. The natural consequence can hardly be absent, that, owing to the daily repetition of the same sacred form, with merely the alteration introduced in reference to the saint of the day, the priest's feelings towards the enormous significance of the service in accordance with the dogma of his Church is blunted; and for the layman, who for the most part does not even notice that change, the general sentiment of devotion alone remains. Moreover, the movements hither and thither of the priest and the acolytes at the altar, this individual bowing and bending of the knee, has all, no doubt, in its origin an allegorical sense, but these allegories came into existence in days somewhat lacking in taste, and in the course of time, owing to diversity of forced explanations, have become almost incomprehensible to the layman. Christ made



the Holy Communion, which, however, is something quite different from a mass, to be not the central feature of His life, but the crowning one with its ennobling sufferings, and the Apostles instituted deacons in order to be free for the ministry of the Word of God. We do not venture to refuse the Church the right of historical development in this matter, but the notion that Christ said mass in the presence of the Apostles, and these in the presence of the first congregations, is so utterly inconceivable that it must be admitted that in this case there has taken place not a development, but an innovation and perversion. It is objected that by preaching being the central feature of Protestant worship the church is made into a school and a lecture-room. But our Lord Himself had scholars. On the other hand, to our knowledge He offered no sacrifice save Himself, and in that respect every minister may imitate Him, in the silent offering up of his whole life, and, if it be required by the circumstances of his environment, by the sacrifice of property and person. This is the real imitation of Jesus. In the Protestant Church there may be too much preaching, and the majesty of the Divine Word is sometimes obliged to submit itself to the shortcomings of the individual expounder. Nevertheless, there is in this a return to apostolic usage, undeniable, and peremptorily demanded by spiritual development. Doubtless, to say a mass with propriety is an easier attainment, and more quickly acquired by definite training, than the preaching of an edifying sermon every Sunday, but even in the Catholic Church it is not without detriment to the congregation when a minister is devoid of intellectual and moral fitness; and as



Catholic worship requires the splendour and artistic majesty of a sumptuous ecclesiastical display in order adequately to assert itself, so in many a village church, the decoration of which perhaps consists in a figure of Mary, clumsily carved, painted in motley colours, bedizened with wreaths of gaudy flowers, and the altar ministrations of which, apart from the well-meaning priest, are supplied by a squalid, unkempt choir-boy, appearances are unseemly enough, while a simple Scriptural sermon by means of the majesty and blessing inherent in the Divine Word hallows the poorest barn so as to become a venerable temple.

Accordingly the priestly duty of offering the sacrifice of the mass daily, in itself merely blunting through use the sense of commemoration, might very well lead up to other duties connected with pastoral care, which certainly is attended with a greater blessing when directed towards the living than by means of masses for the souls of the dead. It is true that masses also procure for priests their daily bread, in case of those who have been ordained without any definite post, or for whose support it is not adequate. In the more modern church, well organized externally, a careful account is kept, and as each priest is limited to one mass per diem, ecclesiastical corporations and the ecclesiastical lions of the day, who are supplied with more orders for masses than they can meet, hand over a certain number to these poor men. In France book-sellers or definite agencies act as intermediaries, and both in the division of the proceeds and the counting of the masses the business does not appear to have been always carried on without error. For the proletariat of the priesthood provision might with



advantage have been made in other ways from the prelates' palaces. When the business house of the Jesuits at Martinique<sup>1</sup>, which moreover had nothing to do with masses, became bankrupt in 1762, they offered the faithful in Marseilles to pay the amount of the deficit in the shape of masses on their behalf, but these materialistic traders, perhaps Huguenots or Jews, had no relish for such a transaction. With better success a pious form of industry took upon itself a business in shares. In this with a view to the founding of a chapel or monastery or model farm of the monastic sort shares were assigned, which for a trifling payment secure as dividend an interest in a number of masses, which could also be applied to the benefit of souls in Purgatory. In former time traffic in masses was carried on upon such free trade principles, that with unconscious satire their name was applied to a great annual fair, and still dwells in the memories of Protestants as the Mass of Frankfort or of Leipzig; while 'dult', the term for market in Bavaria, can scarcely have any other derivation than *indultus* (for *indulgentia*), meaning a great day for issue of indulgences, and now surviving in the shape of the fair. Alongside of altars which bear the promise that for every mass said at them a soul is released from Purgatory—a matter however of purely general humanity, for the carrying out of which an open purse is not always to be found—there are other altars, still more highly endowed through the sanction of the Pope, where by means of giving a commission for a mass the release of an individual soul by name is procured. These are the masses on behalf of souls, termed by Luther the devil's annual fair.

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 380.



To the dubious features of the mass, and indeed of the whole worship, is to be added the use of a foreign and dead *language*. The ordinary plea on its behalf that in this one Latin ecclesiastical language the unity of the Church is represented, and that every priest at every Catholic altar can say mass in every part of the world, might hold good on the assumption that a priest's sole business is to say masses. But a main reason why the papal Church maintained their ancient tongue for the whole of the West was in order to be able to send out Italian priests in all directions for the enjoyment of wealthy prebends, so far as these could not be directly attached to Rome itself. The national development of the Church has long militated against such a maintenance of Italian and other parasites at the papal Court. Even in the Catholic Church it is recognized that the man who can exercise a spiritual and ministerial activity among a people must be one who at any rate understands their language.

It is true that the parts of the mass of constant recurrence and the most ordinary prayers are, by means of a little book of prayers in the vulgar tongue, not altogether unintelligible to the laity from their school days onwards, so far as they have attended one. Nevertheless the rest, and individual portions in the administration of the Sacrament, continue not understood by the people. Consequently the effect is only, and can only be, of the nature of a dull, impressive sentiment, a dreamy sense of resignation. The nuns of some Orders have daily to say Latin prayers, and most of them do not understand a word of these. Moreover Liguori, that pet saint of Rome, declared that mental attention (and therefore understanding) is not essential. The simple utterance of the words



is sufficient. It is, however, simply arrogance on the part of the Roman Church to thrust upon the faithful of all countries, as though it were the tongue alone worthy of the Deity, this language of her earlier days, which is not even the original speech of Christianity, not that of Christ, nor of the Apostles Peter and Paul, and which she herself in her sacred books and in her official publications speaks as barbarously as possible. In this matter every Catholic nation may confidently venture to speak its own tongue to the good God, Who desires to be praised in all languages and understands them all. For the sake of recognizing a unity of worship we may perchance retain some Latin expressions, such as the *Gloria in excelsis*!<sup>1</sup> or *Sursum corda*!<sup>2</sup> of which even Luther holds that they contain much fine music. Accordingly the Lutheran Church has preserved such as these, and along with the Roman the *Kyrie eleison*!<sup>3</sup> The Papacy quite readily consented to the employment of the mother tongue in worship, where it already prevailed; in former time for the Slavonian peoples, then for the Uniate Greeks<sup>4</sup> and Armenians, and, in the time of the Reformation, for Germany. The Italians, it may be, like to retain the Roman ecclesiastical language as the speech of their ancestors, of which their own tongue still preserves an echo, and which is easily understood by means of it. Nevertheless this mother tongue since the time of Dante has built itself up by such a marvellous rejuvenescence upon the old stem by the development of rule and of beauty, that it has a fair claim to become the sacred language of its nation. Also it is arrogance when the liturgy of the Roman Church claims the

<sup>1</sup> Glory to God in the highest!

<sup>3</sup> Lord, have mercy upon us.

<sup>2</sup> Lift up your hearts.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. i. p. 93.



right to oust every other order of worship which has been established as a national one from time immemorial. In Spain and Bohemia the Pope in old time succeeded in this. Long ago the attempt was made to undermine the ancient Gallican liturgy, as it was maintained unbroken, especially in the diocese of Lyons, from the time of Irenaeus. Undistressed by the dissension which this demand brought about in the midst of the clergy themselves, undistressed in regard to pious attachment to ancient tradition, Pius IX gave directions that the Roman liturgy should be introduced, at least gradually, everywhere, and charged the priests, who held to the ancestral usage, with stirring up rebellion and disobedience.

The Catholic custom of keeping the chief churches open for a large part of the day, has lately called forth warm commendation among ourselves, and a desire to follow suit. Protestantism would suffer no loss thereby, where means are available for maintaining the necessary supervision. There is something which appeals to us in being able at almost any hour of the day to withdraw with one's secret cares into the consecrated peacefulness of a church. However, a quiet corner can be found for this purpose in nearly every house, or, if not, then under the vault of heaven. Christ did not say: When thou desirest to pray, go into the temple, but 'enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret'.<sup>1</sup> The good God is everywhere accessible to us to speak a word with Him in secret, and so is Christ for the man who bears in his heart something of His Spirit and of devotion towards Him. We should add that it is at any rate well known from the light literature of

<sup>1</sup> Matt. vi. 6.



Catholic countries—and it seems in this point to be a true reflex of reality—what purposes the dim light of these open churches occasionally serves.

The service in the larger of the Pope's private Chapels, the Sistine, is conspicuous for its simple, dignified character. Immediately upon entering it, one becomes conscious of the influence of works of genius ministering to an idea. The chapel is lofty, of long rectangular shape, like a Protestant church with only one altar; the walls adorned with pictures of Scriptural subjects by old masters, the ceiling with the history contained in Genesis by Michael Angelo, who could venture to conceive and paint the Eternal Father Himself. Between the windows are the artist's sublime prophets and sibyls, over the altar, as the latest fulfilment of their predictions, his Last Judgement. The Pope on his elevated seat, the cardinals mostly of aged, sagacious, venerable aspect, behind them on one side prelates and monks in their picturesque robes; in the intervening space the Swiss guards in their mediaeval uniform with German colours and bearing halberts: all this presents a lively and striking picture. The music is all sung without organ. On festivals there is also a sermon, in Latin as addressed *ad clerum*, and very short. It is sometimes delivered by pupils in the various seminaries, who probably find in this a great responsibility and encouragement; sometimes on certain feast days by the generals and procurators of the various Orders. In the second part of Holy Week the Matins, which are celebrated here, have attained world-wide celebrity. They consist of certain penitential Psalms, comments of St. Augustine upon them, extracts from the Lamentations of Jeremiah and from the Epistles of St. Paul, which are always upon



each of these days in part recited and in part sung by the singers of the Pope's chapel. The tapers upon a chandelier in the form of a triangle are extinguished in succession according to the number of Psalms recited. The shadows of the departing day grow gradually darker. The last taper is concealed under the altar, and with a dull noise made by the rattling of benches, which is meant to betoken the confusion and alarm on the death of the Saviour, the assembly breaks up.

This solemnity has, however, its really dark sides. First of all, without the Pope or Catholicism being the least to blame, the crowd of foreigners who desire to behold the sacred sight, or at any rate to be hearers, became so large that the limited space of the chapel was no longer sufficient, and, in spite of all attempts to reduce the numbers admitted, the pressure became so severe that the Swiss guard were sometimes compelled to enforce quiet by very vigorous measures. It is always assumed that that crowd consists in large part of Protestants. Accordingly, not only the singing but also the predominant recitative is as though calculated to make the sense unintelligible, so that even one who has an adequate knowledge of Latin, and has the printed text before him, can only follow with difficulty. Under such circumstances it must happen that the great crowd in the most uncomfortable position—the men mostly standing, the ladies all behind high lattice work—barely obtaining a slight glimpse of the picture presented by the solemn assembly, subsisting upon the short intervals of actual singing alternating with unintelligible, unmelodious tones, gaze eagerly at the great chandelier, until at length the last taper is extinguished and the tones of the *Miserere* swell out



in their sweetness and melancholy, thus forming the climax of the whole. Then even to this service of mourning there is not altogether lacking what only custom can render inoffensive, viz. the drapery and the changing of articles of clothing, owing to which on the occasion of many other important functions the church, and in particular the sacristy, has the aspect of a robing room. Here, however, this is illustrated by the cardinals alone, at the so-called adoration with which the sacred function begins. While one after another kisses the hand and knee of the Pope—an operation which, as many a one who takes part in it must be conscious, rarely enough shows to advantage—the long violet cloaks belonging to this time of mourning are unfolded by their train-bearers, and then, each returning to his place, rolled up again like the tail of a scorpion. But upon the Pope's head there is a constant interchange of the episcopal mitre with the skull-cap, and the cloak which covers his feet is sometimes open and sometimes folded together. All this may have its allegorical meaning, but what does it really signify in the presence of a devout assembly and of the good God whose Viceroy sits there as a sacred statue, on which this and that is placed, so that he scarcely appears to be possessed of the powers of motion, except when he takes snuff or blows his nose.

Lastly, this solemnity was observed by the early Christians, while it was still night, before break of day. For this reason it was called *matins* or *nocturns*. For convenience sake, and in conformity with what is virtually a necessity at the present day, the service for each night now commences at the third hour before sunset on the preceding afternoon. Hence it comes about that the ceremonial of Maundy Thursday falls



as early as Wednesday, and that of Good Friday on the Thursday. If in this way there at once results some confusion in our sentiment with regard to the celebration, this reaches its culminating point in the fact that the papal Church, which otherwise is not keen to be in advance of the times, no later than eleven o'clock on the Saturday sings the *Gloria in excelsis* in honour of the Resurrection. At the same time all the bells, which during the preceding days had remained silent, uplift their brazen tongues, and the cannon thunder from St. Angelo.

Moreover, the Washing of the Feet takes place on the *morning* of the Thursday. No doubt, if this sacred function was to be repeated at all, he who passes for the representative of Christ upon earth is above all others justified in exercising the proud office of carrying out the humble task. It takes place to the accompaniment of the chanting of certain Psalms and the appropriate passages in the Gospel of St. John<sup>1</sup>. The Pope wears a white apron, while two cardinals hold basin and towel. It makes an edifying impression, only, as is usual in Catholic ceremonies, it rises to the point of extravagance, in the Pope's kissing the foot when moistened and dried, although this is merely the counterpart to the customary kissing of the Pope's own foot. This, it is true, is administered on the cross-band of his shoe, yet it is a real kissing of his foot, a thing which Christ only permitted to the passionate affection of a grateful and loving woman. So subsequently the Pope waits upon these pilgrims at a meal, instead of eating with them as did Christ as the head of a household with those belonging to Him.

Concerning the blessing which before this function

<sup>1</sup> John xiii. 1 ff.



the Pope imparts from the loggia of St. Peter's, the Roman saying is: 'It does not cross the Tiber.' The blessing on Easter Sunday, on the other hand, holds good for the city and the world (*urbi et orbi*). In other respects both ceremonies make the same impression, only that at the Easter celebration crowds of country people in their gay attire come in from the mountain districts. There is the Pope with the triple crown; behind him fans of white peacocks' feathers. The piazza in front of St. Peter's, enclosed by a stately colonnade with the Egyptian obelisk in the middle, is large enough to enable a hundred thousand men conveniently to stand there or to fall upon their knees. I procured myself this blessing once as early as the time of Pius VIII<sup>1</sup>, whose suffering countenance, already marked for death, might even reconcile Protestants to what appeared to be the apotheosis of a mortal; for yet more certain than the effect of this blessing upon those who receive it, is the deliberate intention with which this impressive ceremony was arranged for the glorification of the Papacy. Nevertheless, in the beatified countenance of Pio Nono it was easily to be seen that he himself receives a blessing as well. Between the two comes in Gregory XVI, with his morose countenance and the diseased nose, with regard to which the ill-mannered jest was made about the cancerous affection of the Church. He certainly did not look as if he willingly blessed his people and the world. While Pius IX pronounced the Easter blessing with a firm ringing voice, there could meanwhile be heard in the pauses the dull thundering of the cannon from St. Angelo, until at the close the bells and the fanfare of the trumpets struck in. In the years of the French

<sup>1</sup> Francesco Xaviero, Pope 1829-30.



occupation the wide piazza looked warlike, owing to the regiments posted there and the cannon drawn up. The crowds of people, however, surging in between restored the aspect of peace.

Immediately before the pronouncing of the blessing the procession of the papal Court and the prelates who may be present, advances through St. Peter's, the Pope borne upon the shoulders of his guard. This procession forms the chief element of the festival of Corpus Christi, on which the Church, stepping out into the street, discloses her material splendour at its highest point. The Pope is borne around, kneeling before a small altar with the monstrance<sup>1</sup>. It is related that Pius IX on that occasion sat as comfortably as circumstances permitted upon a chair, the feet of the kneeling figure, over which the cloak was drawn, being artificially added. I did not myself see it, inasmuch as at the time of this festival<sup>2</sup> the academic recess is over, but artists and sculptors, who understand such things, assured me of it. The matter is in itself a very innocent one. This procession, which passes over the piazza of St. Peter's, lasts for nearly an hour. It would be almost more than an old man could endure to be borne around lifted up so long in a kneeling position, particularly as Pius suffered from his feet. Nevertheless, when we find a Pope who is only apparently kneeling before the Body of the God-Man, these unreal, artificial limbs of the Pope symbolize impressively the whole position of the Papacy towards Christendom.

The Catholic Church has many local festivals of an individual kind, by means of which she has acquired a

<sup>1</sup> See p. 261.

<sup>2</sup> The Thursday after Trinity Sunday.



deep hold upon the lives of the people, even where they present themselves to us in strange guise and out of keeping with religion. Such is the annual leaping procession at Echternach<sup>1</sup>, at which, moreover, in consideration of payment a substitute is provided to do the leaping; or the Church festivals in lower Italy, which, even in the middle of the town and in the day-time, do not readily run their course without fireworks and the thunder of cannon, so that he who imprudently gets among them has reason to dread that his hearing will be the worse for it. In Palermo I saw in the procession figures of saints of life size being carried round. They were decked with garlands, made not of flowers but of live birds, which naturally did not a little fluttering and twittering.

When the Roman Church is charged with the pagan character of its worship, holy water, incense, relics, worship paid to the dead, altars in honour of deified men—this among the Latin races is quite as much an unconscious echoing of the faith of their fathers as the natural development of the religion of the sensuous, beginning with the carnal hankering after miracles. This kind of religion is at home among people who are purely natural in their impulses, and is cherished by the priests till it reaches the sentimentality with which modern France after a threefold revolution has been consecrated to ‘the sweetest heart of Jesus’. So, too, the difference which lies at the root of these separated Churches attests itself also in worship. Protestantism is the Christianity of the spirit, and therefore of the

<sup>1</sup> A town in Luxembourg with a noted abbey church. The procession referred to is held at Whitsuntide. It originated in the attempt to avoid the return of an epidemic of St. Vitus’s dance, which took place in the eighth century.



freedom which belongs to that spirit, Catholicism the Christianity of the sensuous, over which the magic veil of a show of aestheticism is cast. But inasmuch as man is not wholly spirit, and individual lack of capacity often fails to rise to the height demanded by the spirit of Christianity, Protestant worship is exposed to the danger of a certain emptiness and barrenness. On the other hand, inasmuch as Christianity is nevertheless in its essence the religion of the spirit, of the Holy Spirit, it often in Catholic worship comes to be reduced to something sensuous, in cases where there is present something that charms sense. In this way it is reduced to presenting itself under the aspect of past religions. Notwithstanding, the Roman Church possesses in a striking manner the power which enables a popular religion to minister to the claims of the religious sense and to assure faith. It possesses important means for the cultivation of popular piety, which, however, permits itself to be directed even by the priests towards aims which are not *purely* pious. Such means are a visible presence of the God-Man in the consecrated host, a personal representative of the Godhead in the Pope, a Divine, gracious Woman, at once Mother and Virgin, a crowd of demi-gods, celestial intercessors and earthly ideals, some of them replete with individual poetry, and in addition to these an infallible Church, the sole way of salvation. The only thing is that all this glory lacks full, sincere truth, which is prepared to stand scrutiny, and accordingly lacks as well the promise of everlasting continuance. It would be narrowness unworthy of Protestantism to refuse to recognize the bright, popular character of the Catholic worship; but the ancient religion of the Greeks had these fair forms of worship in a yet higher degree, as may be



read in the melancholy utterances of Libanius<sup>1</sup> in defence of the temples. This worship has nevertheless perished, and had to perish. The worship of the Catholic Church too, when the time comes for its hour to strike, will not lack the tears of the people and of poetry.

<sup>1</sup> A Greek sophist, born circ. 314 at Antioch in Syria, a student and afterwards professor at Athens, who has left an interesting picture of the state of learning and manners there in the fourth century.



## CHAPTER II

### ART

MODERN art is the child of the Church, and therefore of the Catholic Church, inasmuch as worship, owing to its natural affinity for representing a spiritual conception in a material shape, rose to the characteristic representation of the religious as a species of the beautiful.

With regard to the *formative* arts this Church appears to stand so much to the front that, according to received opinion, Protestantism is forced altogether to give way to it in this province. In fact, not only the faith, but also the superstition and the legends of the Catholic Church have given its painters the ideal in the way of leading, and offered them a wealth of subjects. Moreover, expenditure for works of religious art counts as a pious meritorious action.

On the contrary, the Reformed Church, on coming into existence, destroyed the fair heritage of earlier days, and retained merely the bare walls. In Lutheran churches there are not unfrequently to be seen hung around the pulpit or altar, life-sized representations of their former pastors, monotonous in their black clerical coats, some generations with impressive wigs, almost all alike miserably painted. It is a pious deed that the departed pastors should still be permanently assembled in pictorial shape with the rejuvenated congregation, but it is the antithesis of all art.



Nevertheless on a closer examination a settlement seems to have been fully made in this matter as regards the present and future. It has often been noticed that the formative art of the Church reached its highest point at the close of the Middle Ages, and at places like Florence and Rome where the Church's faith was by no means in vigorous life. It was not merely that the infamies of Alexander VI and the warlike deeds of Julius II were veiled with wall-coverings by Raphael. The contemplation of the works of art of classical antiquity, as they came to life again out of the rubbish of centuries, awakened a new sentiment for beauty and spiritual liberty, which even from the Madonnas of Raphael at one time smiles graciously upon us, at another brings us a heart-stirring illumination. Among his other creations in the Vatican, for the glorification of the Papacy, the Church, and at the same time humanity, he painted the Church on earth and that in heaven as gathered to consider the mystery of Transubstantiation, just as he represented philosophy in the School of Athens and poetry on Parnassus, and with the same zest the fortunes of Psyche<sup>1</sup> in the midst of the Olympian gods, and not Mary but Galatea<sup>2</sup> or Aphrodité<sup>3</sup> as the charming ruler of the sea.

There is a parallel in the early history of Greece. When Phidias and Praxiteles<sup>4</sup> gave divine form to their gods, those gods were even in their time mere symbols of their ideas. There was no hostile crusade entered upon against the popular belief, but a silent transformation of it. Hence there presents itself this self-evident law, viz. any sort of religious art has its

<sup>1</sup> The beloved of Eros (Cupid) in Greek mythology.

<sup>2</sup> A sea-nymph, daughter of Nereus and Doris.

<sup>3</sup> The Greek Venus, supposed to have risen from the foam.

<sup>4</sup> Celebrated Greek sculptors of the fifth century B. C.



origin merely in the pious sincerity of a powerful popular belief, but it does not attain a high position till the firmness of that popular faith is beginning to slacken. The Aeginetans of the sculpture gallery at Munich are a testimony to this law of art as exemplified in history. Their bodies show the perfect agility characteristic of Greek sculpture, but their faces all regard us with a foolish grinning smile. This inconsistency is only explained by the fact that notwithstanding advance in skill they did not venture for a considerable time upon altering the features of countenance belonging to the gods and heroes from those which had their rise in the rough commencement of art, and were crystallized by priestly tradition. Thus the pictures by Perugino<sup>1</sup> even at his best time still present merely a pious sincerity. This sacred tradition impressed itself deeply upon Raphael. It appeals to us with tenderest charm in his Espousal of the Virgin (the *Sposulizio*). In the Sistine Madonna it is glorified by attaining the beauty of freedom. An unconscious sentiment on the part of the public has discovered this. None of all the pictures by the greatest painter of the Church became a sacred picture, such as should draw a special popular devotion to itself. In fact, none of those pictures, as far as I know, has continued in Church use. Even in front of the altars with their stone images in St. Peter's I never saw a crowd of believers kneeling. The pictures held sacred by the devotion of the people are either altogether obscured by the lapse of centuries, and then pass for the work of Luke the Evangelist, perhaps touched up by an angel, or they are completely modern, and have been idly

<sup>1</sup> Pietro Vanucci Perugino, the celebrated Umbrian painter, under whom Raphael studied at Perugia for many years; d. 1524.



talked into notoriety owing to some miraculous story. The favourites of the Catholic people are gaudily painted wooden figures which they can bedizen on festival days with brocaded dresses, wigs, and other gewgaws. Urban VIII did indeed put out a Bull, saying: 'Statues should be so finished as not to need decking out with clothes; moreover, the adornment and embellishing of them in a worldly manner should be by no means permitted.' But compliance with this direction was only slight. When the worthy minister<sup>1</sup> of Au, the suburb of Munich, had exchanged an ancient figure of the Virgin, tricked out, and dilapidated, for a statuette more appropriate to the noble architecture of his church, he was upbraided with it as a sacrilege.

Nevertheless some of our German painters have held that they could paint the saints better if they prayed to them as well. Overbeck<sup>2</sup> is recognized as the most noteworthy among them. To him his art became a David's harp. He who regards his pictures, e.g. the rose miracle in the Portiuncula church at Assisi, or, standing before his cartoons of the seven Sacraments with their Old Testament types and the attractive realism of their individual presentation, heard from his own mouth the explanation of them on Sundays in the church, will not doubt that he found in the Catholic Church the expression of his piety which was most in keeping with his nature. I have still a lively recollection of the scene. Overbeck represented—and it was for the Pope's album—the moment when the inhabitants of Nazareth in their childish folly desired to cast our Lord down from the rock. Intro-

<sup>1</sup> Herbst. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Johann Overbeck, a noted German painter, who carried on his art at Rome, there seceding to the Roman Church; d. 1869.



ducing the miraculous element, and at the same time representing it in an artistic manner, the painter had invoked the aid of two angels, who are ready to support him if he falls. This might pass for an emblem of Pio Nono himself, as having been exemplified in him on one occasion of his history. It was in the spring of 1854, when the conversions to Catholicism arising from Puseyism in England filled Rome with high hopes. 'Is there then no hope that in Germany too there will yet take place a large conversion to our Church, the way of salvation?' Thus spoke Overbeck with a voice so fervent, as though entreating an affirmative reply, that my answer, 'There is not the most distant prospect of it,' and my evident joy in the truth of the response, gave him downright pain as it entered his heart. About the same time Cornelius<sup>1</sup> lived in the Casa Bartholdy, and his reception room was the same as that in which as a youth he had painted those frescoes of the history of Joseph which are held to be the first work on the part of reviving Christian art in Germany. Of these, the 'Sale of Joseph' and the 'Seven Years of Famine' are by Overbeck. 'Look,' said Cornelius on one occasion, 'Overbeck, at that time when he was not yet a Catholic, nevertheless painted as beautifully as ever he has done.' In fact, if we compare the pure ideal faithfulness to nature of these pictures with, let us say, the great allegory in the Museum at Frankfort, the Union of the Arts with Religion, which needs a special commentary in order to understand it, one might rather adopt the opinion that the great natural gifts of this painter, already developed

<sup>1</sup> Peter von Cornelius, a leader of the new school of German painting; d. 1867. His works are chiefly at Munich (Glyptothek and Ludwigs-kirche) and Berlin. See also p. 414.



in a manner, throve by his surrendering himself to Catholicism. But his pictures, especially his well-known drawings, through the pious sentiment which they express and appeal to, have remained equally prized by Catholics and Protestants; while those who followed the course marked out by him, and, as it happens, even improving upon it in a pre-Raphaelite direction—for Raphael in his later period forsook God and was forsaken of Him—desired to return to the artless piety of Angelico of Fiesole<sup>1</sup>, were able to exhibit but little that was edifying.

Accordingly it seems, at least for the more brilliant attainments in art, that there is no need of being or becoming a Catholic. If it is mainly in the form of Catholicism that Christianity has inspired art, and still bestows upon it more artistic material in the varied garb of the clergy and the dress of the different Orders, which are certainly more picturesque than modern dress coats, frock coats, and uniforms, yet, on the other hand, the Church has offered in the ordinary pictures of martyrs a subject, which, while grand from a spiritual point of view, is unlovely and painful. It represents the terrible work of the executioner, which has indeed received an artistic glorification in St. Sebastian<sup>2</sup>, the Apollo of Christian art, but which has not shrunk from going to extremes. St. Dionysius<sup>3</sup> walks about with his head half sawn off; St. Bartholomew<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The celebrated Italian painter of religious subjects. He moved to the monastery of St. Mark's, Florence, from the neighbouring village of Fiesole in 1436, and later to Rome, near which city he died 1455.

<sup>2</sup> A Roman soldier and Christian martyr; shot by order of the Roman emperor Diocletian; circ. 288.

<sup>3</sup> Apostle to the Gauls and patron-saint of France, said to have been beheaded at Paris in 272.

<sup>4</sup> According to tradition flayed alive, and then crucified head downward, at Albanopolis in Armenia.



exposes his own skin to the wrath of God ; St. Erasmus<sup>1</sup> allows his entrails to be wrested from his body, according to Poussin's representation in the Vatican picture, with frightful realism.

Moreover, the Catholic form of worship is decidedly unfavourable to the preservation of ecclesiastical works of art. It may be regarded as not more than a trifling injury that the old bronze statue in St. Peter's, which has long been suspected by antiquaries to be a metamorphosed Jupiter, has had its right foot reduced to a club foot by reason of the kisses made over to the Prince of the Apostles by his successors ; a wasting force of religious kissing, which has shown itself in a yet more marked manner on the noble marble statue of the Saviour by Michael Angelo in the Dominican church at Rome, which derives its name from a temple of Minerva. Thus it appears that this has been effected in little over three hundred years. Here the remedy was to be found, for in the place of the worn foot a bronze covering was applied, which may be kissed for another three hundred years. But pictures, and especially those belonging to an altar, suffer irrecoverably in the course of centuries, owing to the smoke from the lights and the incense, just as we see that *this* judgement is steadily gaining ground in the case of Michael Angelo's 'Last Judgement'. No doubt it may be said, as a noble human life wears itself out in the service of the Church, and every life ought to wear itself out in the service of an idea, why should not a work of men's hands, a picture, do the same ? But in the golden age of ecclesiastical art, in the

<sup>1</sup> A Syrian bishop and martyr under Diocletian, the St. Elmo of Portugal and Italy, invoked against storms, internal pains, and diseases of cattle.



fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, figures were created which hitherto had been unattained, and of a kind which probably will never be attainable. To preserve these works with such an amount of immortality as a human work can attain, and to hand them on to future generations as a priceless inheritance, is a sacred duty towards humanity. Therefore when the works of art, which had been selected with firm hand and borne away to Paris by Napoleon I, came back to the States of the Church through the peace of Vienna<sup>1</sup>, Pius VII did not permit those that had belonged to churches, such as the Madonna of Foligno, to be replaced there, but collected them into a gallery in the Vatican. From the point of view of morality, this might admit of as little justification as the taking possession of the States of the Church. Nevertheless, it was in the interest of these pictures, as tending to their better preservation.

In some cases even Protestantism has preserved the mediaeval glories of ecclesiastical art more faithfully than the Catholic Church itself. In Nuremberg, if we pass out of the church of St. Lawrence, where everything that a pious taste in art and the aptitude of the citizens erected there remains undisturbed in the place where the Reformation found it, and enter the church of Our Lady, which has reverted to Catholicism, in the market-place, a church containing so much that is modern and tricked out in an affected way, we shall be struck by the demonstrative proof which it affords of the above assertion. It is true that Catholicism in its restored form after the Reformation once more took into its service that art which, with fine artistic taste moulded upon the antique, understood how to represent the glow of passion and the extravagance of

<sup>1</sup> After the overthrow of Napoleon I in 1815.



sentiment, but it could not prevent either its secular freedom or its subsequent degeneration into mere affectation. Correggio<sup>1</sup> and Titian<sup>2</sup> did, it is true, paint religious pictures of high repute, but the former, instead of representing the saints in silent majesty and devotion, introduced an almost humorous element. For the poor nuns at Parma he painted roguish Cupids upon the ceiling, and out of the enchanting *chiaro-oscuro* of his mythological pictures there smiles a seductive sensuousness. Titian indeed not only painted the woman, newly created by God and lying pillowed in sweet contentment, the companion wanton to the *Venus de' Medici*, but also the gentle Saviour, with the adulteress of the Gospel and the Assumption of the Madonna. But the adulteress is so charming that every one who is not absolutely a Pharisee would have sought to rescue her. The last is not the adored Mother of God, but the stately woman of earthly mould, who, borne by angels, forces her way into the arms of God. In this way the later Venetian school dealt with subjects suggested by Scripture and Church history, for the most part only in a secular sense. Paul Veronese<sup>3</sup> paints the miracle at the marriage at Cana merely in order to represent a cheerful and fair wedding company. Tintoretto<sup>4</sup> does the Last Judgement for the judgement hall of the Doge's palace, and in doing so passes a small individual judgement upon her who was once beloved by him, but who then proved faithless. Or Venice herself is represented as

<sup>1</sup> Antonio Allegri da Correggio, the famous Italian painter of the Lombard school; d. 1534.

<sup>2</sup> Titiano Vecelli, the famous Venetian painter; d. 1576.

<sup>3</sup> Paolo Cagliari, also a leading member of the Venetian school; d. 1588.

<sup>4</sup> Jacopo Robusti (called Tintoretto, after the trade of his father, a dyer), the noted Venetian painter; d. 1594.



a beautiful and stately dame, with the patron of the republic, St. Mark, and his lion ; or the humiliation of the great emperor of the Hohenstauffen line<sup>1</sup> under the great Pope Alexander III, in order to exhibit the church of St. Mark with all the bright majesty of the republic, mistress of the sea. Then there came that deterioration which a late regeneration of art termed the peruke style. In Rome itself Bernini<sup>2</sup>, the Pope's sculptor, still summoned up extraordinary artistic skill in order to represent nature in its commonness, and yet in most cases distorted. Moreover, under Urban VIII of the house of the Barberini he placed upon the Pantheon the two bell turrets, which the people of Rome, with their innate sense of art, term Bernini's ass's ears, and he tore away from the celestial vault of the Pantheon the bronze sheets that had been spared by so many barbarians, in order that he might mould from them a tasteless high altar with twisted pillars like a worm. Owing to a pious prudery, Michael Angelo's<sup>3</sup> 'Last Judgement' was only saved from destruction by being painted over. Daniel de Volterra<sup>4</sup> lost no time in supplying with something in the way of garments certain who were rising in too unclothed a state, and so procured for himself the honourable name of the hose-painter. The Jesuits also appear in this connexion as the posthumous sons of Catholicism, inasmuch as their churches, although gaudily painted and richly gilt, are almost without any real works of art.

<sup>1</sup> Frederick I (Barbarossa), emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, 1155-89, who made submission at the entrance of St. Mark.

<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, architect, sculptor, and painter ; d. at Rome, 1680.

<sup>3</sup> Michelangelo Buonarroti, the noted Italian painter, sculptor, architect, and poet. For his 'Last Judgement' see p. 388 ; d. 1564.

<sup>4</sup> Italian painter and sculptor ; d. 1566.



The first to declare again the laws of true beauty was, it is true, a Catholic, in fact one who previously had become such, our countryman Winckelmann<sup>1</sup>; but to adopt that faith was in his case merely a painful sacrifice, made in order to attain the object of his life, which he could only realize in Rome, and at that time only as a Catholic. Though then it was a Catholic born who was the first to carry out these laws again in marble, yet it was not Catholic ideas, but the statues of pagan antiquity which Canova<sup>2</sup> sought to outdo in polished beauty. Subsequently our countryman Dannecker<sup>3</sup>, applying chiefly classical ideals to Christianity, in his representation of Christ made it apparent how the Logos might take the form of marble, and Thorwaldsen<sup>4</sup>, the noble Dane, bringing back the age of Pericles, and adopting the same lofty idea, represented the triumphal march of Alexander, as well as the Lord in the midst of the Apostles. Our contemporary sculptors of Protestant extraction in German countries have by means of their art done service both to patriotic and ecclesiastical objects. Rauch<sup>5</sup>, after representing the Queen in the fair sleep of death, and the Prussian heroes, executed the apotheosis of Frederick the Great. Drake<sup>6</sup>, after his first success with the Mother and Divine Child, produced the Protestant Confessor-Elector at the Jubilee festivities of his University of Thüringen, for the benefit of future

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 92.

<sup>2</sup> Antonio Canova, the noted Italian sculptor; d. 1822.

<sup>3</sup> Johann Heinrich von Dannecker, the German sculptor; d. 1841.

<sup>4</sup> Albert Bertel Thorwaldsen; died at Copenhagen, 1844.

<sup>5</sup> Christian Daniel Rauch, German sculptor; d. 1857. The queen referred to is Louise of Prussia at Charlottenburg. His monument to Frederick the Great is in Berlin.

<sup>6</sup> Friedrich Drake, sculptor; died at Berlin, 1882.



centuries. Rietschel<sup>1</sup> renewed for ever the union of the Dioscuri of Weimar in their band of august friendship. His last conception and representation had to do with the godlike hero of Worms, surrounded by the supporters who set forth his doctrine, and thus it dealt with Protestantism itself.

The Reformation was unfavourable to sacred representations, inasmuch as it saw that they were virtually the subjects of adoration as idols. It found in the Old Testament the Divine prohibition: 'Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image, nor the likeness of any form that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them, nor serve them.'<sup>2</sup> As actual exceptions, there were merely the golden cherubim upon the ark of the covenant and the brazen serpent in the wilderness. If it was not till later days that the Hebrew people took that command as absolutely forbidding formative art, at any rate it was from the first meant to be opposed to every representation by way of figure, which should be an object of religious veneration alongside of the one jealous God, and thus it very distinctly affects the Catholic veneration of the representations of the saints. In the New Testament, Protestantism found the warning: 'Guard yourselves from idols'<sup>3</sup>; and it was obvious to apply the last warning of the Apostle of love, in the face of the idols of *his* time, to the representations of the saints of our time. No less were the Reformers able to appeal to the earliest tradition of the Church. When, however, Christianity, with its Judaic fear of images, made its way among people who were pos-

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Friedrich Auguste Rietschel designed the Goethe-Schiller bronze monument at Weimar; died at Dresden, 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Ex. xx. 4.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John v. 21.



sessed of a lofty and hereditary training in art and had imagery on every side of them, sacred subjects began gradually to be represented under the form of symbols, Christ as the Good Shepherd, or as a Ram in the midst of the Apostles as lambs, while a dove, a fish, a lion, a palm were used to represent Christian ideas. But as late as the commencement of the fourth century the Council of Elvira<sup>1</sup> decided: 'It is not fitting that there should be pictures in churches, lest that which is worshipped and adored be painted on walls.' Epiphanius<sup>2</sup>, the ancient champion of the orthodox faith, boasted that in a village church in Palestine he had torn down a curtain upon which was depicted the figure either of Christ or of some saint, for he has no very distinct recollection of the subject; this seeming to him as unimportant as the matter itself was contrary to the teaching of Holy Scripture.<sup>3</sup> But contemporaneously with the full victory over heathenism, its delight in pictorial art passed over to the Church, and soon developed into a cult of representations of sacred subjects. When, on the other hand, a medley of combined Jewish and primitive Church memories, along with later illumination originating from the imperial Court in the eighth century, reached the point of iconoclasm, this passionate feeling was yet unable to attain success, although it had the support even of a Council, summoned as ecumenical (that of Constantinople in 754), which condemned the worship of images as a temptation of Satan to idolatry. The cause of its failure was that it tackled the subject with violent methods, and would have annihilated all artistic culture in Christendom. That which in the passionate, fanatical defence of sacred images was sup-

<sup>1</sup> In 306 (can. 36).      <sup>2</sup> See p. 345.      <sup>3</sup> *Ep. ad Ioann. Hieros.* [H.]



ported as the minimum, viz. kneeling in adoration of these, kissing, incense, came, by means of the second Council of Nicaea<sup>1</sup>, to be a dogma directing the cult. The clear perception of Charles the Great, and in accord with him the German Church of his day, recognized the claim of images in the Church for purposes of ornament and grateful remembrance, but rejected every form of religious veneration of them, as such had been set forth by ignorant Greeks at a Council. But this Council had already received recognition in Rome, and along with the worship of saints the veneration of images also prevailed. Although this was opposed to Scripture and tradition, it was nevertheless in keeping with the genius of this Church, and derived much strength from miracle-working images. To meet the objections of Protestantism, Trent<sup>2</sup> laid stress upon the statement that confidence was not to be reposed upon the images as such, but that the veneration only held good for the originals; a very unstable distinction in popular religious life. Moreover, the Church Fathers charged paganism with praying to gods of stone, although its learned men made the same distinction.

Only reformed Protestantism, in its alarm at the idea of the deification of the creature, renewed the iconoclastic fervour. The German Reformation returned to the measured utterance of Charles the Great. Luther, with the power possessed by genius for seeing the natural affinities of things, desired that the arts too should be used for the service of Him who had created them. Albert Dürer<sup>3</sup>, already at the summit of his artistic power, when the Reformation

<sup>1</sup> In 787.

<sup>2</sup> S. XXV. [H.]

<sup>3</sup> Of Nuremberg, founder of the German school of painting and engraving; d. 1528.



dawned, felt himself at once attracted by it. At the time when it was thought that Luther, in the face of the excommunication and proscription which made him an outlaw, hidden in the solitude of the Wartburg, had secretly fallen a sacrifice to his enemies, Dürer wrote from Antwerp: 'O God, Luther is dead! Who will henceforward deliver to us so clearly the Holy Gospel? How completely would he have supplied us, if spared to write for another ten or twenty years! O all ye pious Christian men, help me to bewail this divinely inspired man, and to pray God that He would send us another of equal enlightenment.' Dürer's grandest sacred pictures, St. John and St. Peter, St. Mark and St. Paul, originated from this reforming movement. The faithful Lucas Cranach<sup>1</sup> is in a very special sense the painter of the Reformation, inasmuch as he has in his pictures preserved to us the features of Reformers and Princes of that period. In the last piece which he produced before his death, the altar-piece of the town church at Weimar, he has represented the foundation of the faith of reforming Protestantism itself—the crucified Saviour, the Lamb Who bears the sin of the world, and at the same time the Conqueror of death and the devil, with symbolic surroundings in allegorical form, and with the most individual reference to those whom the painter most highly honoured upon earth.

The fresh impetus given to painting originated indeed in Rome, and was not devoid of religious motive, but it was carried out by German artists and without any distinctive severance as regards creed. Protestantism in both its forms, as it developed, laid aside every prejudice against the use of art in its

<sup>1</sup> Died at Weimar, 1553.



sanctuaries. Prejudice was only called forth by antagonism. There was even formed a Church union for the advancement of sacred art in the evangelical Church, and this without any sort of opposition. As subjects for sacred art there lie open to Protestantism the complete and vast realms of Biblical history from the days of Creation to the narratives in the Apocalypse of St. John, from which indeed early Catholic art also obtained its noblest subjects. The Mother of our Lord in all those lofty poetic and inspiring moments which the story of the Birth and Passion offer, in her youthful virgin beauty and in the sublimity of her grief, remains for Protestant art as well ; only that her supramundane appearances would be uncongenial to us as Church pictures, however much we esteem the graceful representations of them in the temples of art. We have accordingly the Ascension and the Transfiguration of our Lord ; while even Raphael, at the summit of his brief but eminent career, could represent nothing higher than this profoundly significant picture of the mundane glorification of humanity with the glorified representatives of the past on either side, in contrast with the different stages of human development, from the Apostles stupified with sleep and dazzled by the light to the demoniac boy, over whom has not yet been spoken the utterance of faith and power which is to deliver him. Legend in the hands of the painting fraternity of the Protestant Church is a pious tradition yielding much that is harmless. Thus the journeying of the Wise Men from the East has passed over into the three Kings even in the popular belief of Protestants. But the whole of the rich history belonging to the Church, the history of her sufferings, her victories, her resurrection, lies open to Protestant



ecclesiastical painters down to the present time as an appendix to Scriptural subjects. Thus Lucas Cranach in his great altar-piece placed himself and Luther under the Cross. Moreover, following the precedent set by Cranach, in whom the tradition of one combining the functions of Evangelist and painter is fulfilled, the history of the Reformation still presents a collection of subjects, specially fitted for Protestant countries. Thus not long since the Leipzig disputation<sup>1</sup> was represented in characteristic pictures by Hübner<sup>2</sup> and Lessing<sup>3</sup>. The last named produced the Hussite pictures reaching back beyond Luther's time : Hus as preacher of repentance before the hierarchy at the Council of Constance ; his martyrdom as he prayed in the face of the stake, where are depicted too the various ranks of spiritual persons present at this festal sacrifice ; lastly, though in order of time the first, the Hussite movement, the eccentric preacher with cup and sword, amid groups of his people who show various degrees of responsiveness, while in the background there is a burning church.

Often one scarcely knows to what creed the artists of the present day belong, if this has not come to be shown through a change of religion, or if they apply their art without scruple to one and the other Church. The monument in St. Peter's to Pius VII, that real and eminent sufferer, could not have been fitly given to any other than the Protestant Thorwaldsen. Steinhäuser, who went over to the Catholic Church, and there, after the manner of proselytes, was kept well

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 244.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf Julius Benno Hübner, a German historical painter ; died near Dresden, 1882.

<sup>3</sup> Karl Friedrich Lessing, similar in subjects ; died at Karlsruhe, Baden, 1880.



occupied, in his joy at the revival of ancient Church art constructed a costly candelabrum of white marble inlaid with variegated mosaic. Frederick William IV acquired this for his Friedenskirche at Potsdam. The artist, who soon after completed an altar-piece in the same style with slabs of antique marble, on the front the entombment of Christ as a relief, on both sides graceful figures of angels, would scarcely have scrupled to permit the altar-piece to follow the candlestick. Earlier than this, in accordance with a fancy of Bettina von Arnim<sup>1</sup> he took Goethe as model for his figure of Zeus, and represented him in marble.

Cornelius, this thinker among painters, was born in the Catholic Church, and remained its adherent with gentle loyalty. It is not at variance with this character that among those destined for hopeless torments, in his 'Last Judgement' in the Ludwigskirche at Munich,<sup>2</sup> a man with the triple crown and another with a monk's cowl are included in the group of hypocrites. Dante saw more than one Pope and more than one monk in hell; those of whom Möhler wrote: 'Hell devoured them.' Before the taking down of the scaffolding, the criticism was once made to Cornelius that, as he had judged it not unfitting to place a Protestant clergyman in that group, so too he might have suitably represented among the saved some one recognizable as a Protestant, even were it only Albert Dürer. He did not shelter himself by the dogma that in the Church alone is to be found salvation, but only answered in Pilate's<sup>3</sup> best manner: 'What I have painted, I have painted.' On another occasion, when

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth von Arnim, a German writer, noted for her correspondence (but largely spurious) with Goethe; d. 1859.

<sup>2</sup> Where the whole of the wall at the back of the high altar is covered with the largest of his frescoes, the 'Last Judgement.' <sup>3</sup> See John xix. 22.



requested to place the arch-heretic Luther among the damned, he answered : ' Very well ; but with the Bible in his hand, that the devils may tremble before him.' Once in Rome, when speaking of people becoming Catholics presumably from enthusiasm for art, he said in vexed tones : ' If so much as one of our artist contemporaries becomes a Catholic, I will turn Protestant.' His immortal fame depends not upon that greatest of all church pictures in point of space, but on the frescoes of the Glyptothek, appropriate in their position there, the myths of the Grecian gods and the tragedy of the fall of Troy.<sup>1</sup> Moreover he had no hesitation, after he had adorned Munich, in transferring himself to the service of the Protestant King, and in designing for the Protestant church in the Campo Santo at Berlin the cartoons for the beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount and for the idealized apocalyptic representation of Death. Also in the sad, and only too certain, anticipation that he could not himself complete the work, he painted the complete sketch in colour for the main picture, not this time as before a Last Judgement, but an anxious expectation of it, in which was involved this tragic accompaniment that in the august assemblage for judgement the likenesses of the royal pair had to be painted, showing them kneeling and surrounded by their whole court. But the portraits and uniforms of the chamberlains of the Prussian Court do not readily adapt themselves to an ideal picture as do the figures of the ancient donors.

Kaulbach<sup>2</sup> was, for aught I know, a Protestant ; but his great dramatic pictures, now collected in the New

<sup>1</sup> They stand in Rooms VIII and IX.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Auguste Kaulbach, director of the Art Academy at Munich, 1872.



Museum at Berlin, the Tower of Babel, the Destruction of Jerusalem, would become a Catholic as well as a Protestant church, although the Battle of the Huns—this symbol of unceasing spiritual conflict—bears more of a Protestant character ; and as the aim was to show in a visible form the new birth of the spirit, the dawn of the age which we in our gladsome sympathy with it term our own, in its men of genius and saints, it came to be of necessity a Reformation picture, the central figure of which, albeit somewhat in the background, is Luther.<sup>1</sup> But as regards the representation of the Ages of the World, the picture of Grecian manners<sup>2</sup>, or the pride excited by Kaulbach in the war against the old bagwig style in the new Pinacothek at Munich, these have in fact nothing churchly about them, and yet they are intended to be genuine art pictures after the mind of both Churches. Such too is the newest school of painting in its completely natural character and wealth of colour, a *stranger* to the Church certainly, but yet as little *hostile* towards her as is Nature herself.

Owing to the love of art which happily characterized the Popes of the first half of the sixteenth century, and owing to the mass of statues which have been once more collected in the Vatican and the Lateran, Rome has become for the world the centre of the arts of design. The last German Pope, Adrian VI<sup>3</sup>, when he was conducted through the heritage of classical antiquity, said contemptuously : ‘ But they are merely figures of idols.’ All the later Popes since Clement XIV, however little in other respects they

<sup>1</sup> On the staircase of the New Museum there are six great pictures by Kaulbach, including those mentioned above.

<sup>2</sup> Still referring to his Berlin pictures.

<sup>3</sup> Pope 1522-3.



followed in his footsteps, became, owing to the nature of things, art Princes. Each considered it an honour that the statues which were constantly reappearing from this fruitful Campo Santo of antiquity, should be incorporated in the Vatican collection and bear his name. Even the dictates of pious reverence had sometimes to yield to the interests of art. A sarcophagus from the family burial-place of the Scipios, as well as the coffins of St. Helena<sup>1</sup>, mother of Constantine, and of his daughter Constantia, mighty masses of porphyry, were transferred to this museum as works of art. In the ceiling paintings of one of the chambers belonging to the time of Pius VI little Cupids sport, to be considered, if necessary, as angels, with the keys of the papal arms. To the spacious halls devoted to the ancient gods and heroes, Pius VII added a new marble hall (*braccio nuovo*). Gregory XVI himself commenced an Etruscan Museum furnished from the tombs of pre-Roman times. Pius IX brought together in a gallery, and presented in a manner thoroughly in keeping with their dignity, the limited number of pictures which held the first rank, and the Vatican became the richest palace of art in the world. The things that Rome fashions now, apart from saints and bishops, are artistic. In former days pilgrims journeyed to Rome in order to pay their devotions at the threshold of the Apostles and the tombs of the martyrs; but nowadays it is for the purpose of receiving education and enjoyment from all the glory of pagan as well as Christian art amassed there. The antagonism between Catholicism and Protestantism has there disappeared. The visitors are mainly English, German, and American; to these have of late been added

<sup>1</sup> See p. 355.



French. According to the general opinion, Protestants are decidedly in the majority. But the peculiarly Catholic art of the place itself has had but little share in the new impulse. Pius IX caused to be painted in the beautiful old church of St. Agnese the supposed miracle, how he and those about him were saved by St. Peter when being precipitated by the breaking of a platform, and in the Vatican on three large wall paintings his raising of the Immaculate Conception to a dogma, close beside the 'Stanze' of Raphael. One generally shudders on passing from the fading glory of those divinely inspired pictures to the room which contains those miracles, the product rather of a dyer than a painter. On this side of the Alps the opposition of the Church, albeit only of the most uncultured portion of it, to Art's free exercise of her powers, has occasionally been made to prevail to a fanatical extent. When Kaulbach's picture of the new saint Arbues<sup>1</sup> condemning a family to the stake was exhibited for a charitable object in Munich, threatening letters declared that this picture would be destroyed if it were not withdrawn. In 1840, when the statue of Gutenberg<sup>2</sup> was set up in Strassburg and bas-reliefs on the base, in order to represent the blessings procured by his art, showed Luther with the Bible alongside of Bossuet, the French populace threatened to destroy the whole monument, unless the heretic was removed. The sculptor David, in his annoyance, removed Bossuet as well, and substituted persons who cannot be considered as superior in piety, Erasmus and Montesquieu.

<sup>1</sup> Pedro Arbues, a Spanish Augustinian monk and inquisitor. In 1485 he was fatally wounded as the result of a conspiracy by the relatives of his victims.

<sup>2</sup> Johannes Gutenberg, one of the claimants to the invention of printing; d. circ. 1468.



Roman taste in *Church architecture* had established itself upon ancient models in the shape of the rectilinear basilica and dome-vaulting. In the oldest churches ancient columns of every sort were seized from the temples, and these buildings themselves were occasionally occupied by Christianity in its capacity as a rescuing power. The German mind with more originality had developed pointed architecture in its highest form, while nevertheless in the case of the noblest of its results it left them incomplete when the Reformation entered on the scene. Protestantism did not produce a new style in keeping with its form of worship, and only adapted to its needs with more or less success the architecture which it found to its hand. But in the rebuilding, by means of contributions from all Catholic countries, of St. Paul's church<sup>1</sup> after it had been burned down, we behold the latest important monument of the Church architecture of Rome. The interior, where they practically followed the lines of the old church, is simple, cold, and magnificent; but the newly built external features, the tower and façade, exhibit a hotch-potch style, as though after the design made by a drunken man. Thus one might assume a complete collapse of ecclesiastical architecture in Rome, whereas in Germany the cathedral of Cologne has been completed in its original purity and majesty, and that through Protestant aid and by means of three Protestant kings. It forms an august monument of the German people as a whole, which moreover has restored, and will certainly one day complete, the minster at Strassburg won back, and through the grace of God saved as a brand from the burning of the bomb-shells.

<sup>1</sup> i. e. St. Paul's without the Walls (Fuori le mura), of which almost the whole, except the choir, was consumed in 1823.



I do not attach much importance to the admission that the modern *drama* has been developed from the Catholic religion, for the Catholic Church long refused actors Christian burial, and it must be confessed that many Lutheran pastors agreed. The Passion play at Oberammergau<sup>1</sup>, although only a survival of past days, has shown that such a religious representation, placing as it does the sacred history before one's eyes, has a permanent force in arousing men's souls to devotion. A special merit has been attributed to Catholicism on that account. But religious plays of this sort have for a long time been produced in Protestant schools, and in particular Nativity plays, even among Protestant communities, without much show down to the nineteenth century. Our admission, however, is limited to this, that a rural population, consisting of Catholics, who are in other respects as well accustomed to embrace and regard sacred things as the direct objects of sense, might now for the first time undertake such a play with devotional self-surrender, although hitherto without experience of it. On the other hand, the point in which the Oberammergau play is in keeping with the age, and which has even induced so many Protestants on the late occasions of its performance to desire to be present and show a devotional spirit, in spite of the very moderate value of the words from a poetic point of view, consists in this, that the sacred personages speak, almost without exception, in the words of Holy Scripture. Even Mary only appears as the Mother through whose heart a sword pierces. Also a continuation of the mediaeval festival play is effected by the presentation of the Old Testament scenes not as a long Biblical history, but as types

<sup>1</sup> See p. 285.



in the form of living pictures. Separated from the New Testament treatment, they precede each scene from the latter as a pleasing introduction and suggestive prediction.

Music also, so far as it has been matured in accordance with the rules of art, has reached its height through the Catholic Church. The Reformation age found it already excessive in elaboration, no longer conveying and sympathetically interpreting the inexpressible sentiment of devotion. The need of reform was recognized, and it was carried out in both Churches in accordance with their distinctive characters and with no great interval between them. In the Protestant Church it took place at once owing to the pressing nature of the need, which was met by the gracious gift of genius in the shape of popular church singing, embodying also the echoes of popular airs. From Luther's monastery there sounded forth the battle-song of Protestantism, inspired, and, just for that reason, defiant, 'Ein' feste Burg,' hymn and tune as sprung from one heart. The power of the tune makes itself felt even when subjected to the profanation of being introduced in the midst of secular music in Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*<sup>1</sup>, where it solemnly asserts itself in trumpet tones and gives the stamp to Protestantism. Goudimel<sup>2</sup> indeed was slain in the massacre of St. Bartholomew, which was subsequently celebrated at Lyons as well, but his airs set to the French Psalms drowned and survived all the thunder of battle that belonged to the religious wars. It was a well-known saying: 'The people are singing them-

<sup>1</sup> Giacomo Meyerbeer, the German composer of opera. The date of his *Les Huguenots* is 1836. He lived chiefly at Paris, where he died 1864.

<sup>2</sup> Claude Goudimel, French composer, killed, as above, 1572.



selves into Lutheranism'; and the Sorbonne perceived the singing of the Psalms to be so dangerous that they forbade it under a severe penalty. The Catholic Church distinctly reflected that if the art of music was to be preserved for the Church new courses must be struck out. An artistic, and at the same time simple and striking, kind of music was invented by Palestrina<sup>1</sup>, the pupil of Goudimel, and continued by Allegri<sup>2</sup> and his successors, in the two main forms which it assumed, viz. the Mass, which in its constituent elements leaves room for the whole gamut of religious emotions, and the compositions for solemn days, in particular Matins with their penitential climax, the *Miserere*. If this formed the graver side of the art, leading Protestant musicians succeeded them, John Sebastian Bach<sup>3</sup> and Handel<sup>4</sup> have sounded all the depths and heights of music, which are personified in *St. Cecilia*.

At the present time among the Latin races Church music has suffered degradation. In particular in Italy, regardless of the admonition given at Trent<sup>5</sup>, we hear the most jaunty operatic airs upon the organ. A conspicuous exception is the Pope's chapel, whose choir rivals that of St. Peter's, and along with the ceremonial of ancient times has maintained a noble musical tradition. There is however, apart from the improprieties already touched upon, a peculiar circumstance connected with the famous singing during Holy Week in the Sistine. The Penitential Psalms are there chanted antiphonally on one note, only the last word of each

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina, composer to the Pontifical choir; the first who united the art with the science of music; died at Rome, 1594.

<sup>2</sup> Gregorio Allegri, Italian composer; died at Rome in 1652.

<sup>3</sup> The great German composer; d. 1750.

<sup>4</sup> George Frederick Handel, the celebrated German composer; died in London in 1759.

<sup>5</sup> S. XXII. [H.]



sentence being accented in the melody. The effect is wearisome and yet bustling, for there are such a number. As a judge, not out of sympathy with the Pope's chapel, and himself a highly gifted proficient in ecclesiastical music, put it: 'It sounds as if so many men were quarrelling with vehement hatred, so that each pertinaciously repeats the same words to the others.' In the intervals the Lamentations of Jeremiah are, it is true, sung with more melody and sentiment. But while in the original text the individual strophes of these elegies, in accordance with a device not very highly poetical, commence with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet in succession, a thing which the Latin translation was unable to copy, an ancient translation in use by the Church nevertheless retained these Hebrew initials at the head of each strophe, and the old composers indulged their eccentric desire to express with pathos these letters. Accordingly there are sung with melting fervour at the beginnings of the successive sections, Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth, and so on, as though they were the most touching thoughts connected with the story of the Passion. In my Textbook, printed under double censure from Rome, I say as commendation of this piece of bad taste: 'Thus it comes to pass that the first elements of speech are also the first elements of lamentation.'<sup>1</sup>

When at the close the *Miserere*, i.e. the fifty-first Psalm, is sung, the striking effect of this chant is modified, on the one hand, by the harsh recitative, preceding and constantly following the individual verses, but, on the other hand, by the sweet pathetic melody which swells up, not as though coming from heaven,

<sup>1</sup> Ufficio della Settimana Santa, Roma. 1853, p. 97. [H.]



but as though at the foot of the Cross. For this an immortal model was provided by Allegri. Moreover by a strangely mysterious arrangement, whether it is too difficult for the present time, or too monotonous, inasmuch as the verses are not supplied with separate music, Allegri's setting has never, since I have known it, been carried through, but has been interwoven more or less with modern compositions.

On the morning of Good Friday the story of the Passion according to St. John appeared to me to be no less effective in producing religious emotion by the instrumentality of music. A deacon reads the Gospel on the accustomed Church note, but where words spoken are introduced, when e.g. it says, 'And Jesus said,' a tenor voice sings these particular words, while the words of Pilate are given in bass, and the sayings of the priests and the people by the whole choir with great precision. The similarity to Bach's Passion according to St. Matthew surprised me. If we did not know how the latter almost spontaneously grew up in the church of St. Thomas<sup>1</sup> out of the Saxony form of worship, and that the Leipzig precentor at that time had hardly any special knowledge of the Pope's chapel, we might take the Protestant Passion music for an imitation which, according to its Protestant character, introduced the congregation to a share in it by means of the Chorales introduced. On a comparison of the two no one versed in music will deny that in depth of thought and masterly execution the German composition stands to the Roman in somewhat of a converse relation to that which is borne by St. Matthew's story of the Passion to the same as told by St. John.

<sup>1</sup> Leipzig. The church has great musical traditions, Bach having been cantor there 1723-50.



The Pope's chapel possesses a good number of pieces, either ancient or by masters belonging to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Moreover, the tradition connected with their musical productions, although, as is said, it has sunk low and is straitened by difficulties, is to find good eunuchs to act as powerful sopranos. The Church has forbidden that they should be made for this purpose, and yet she cannot do without them, since woman, with the voice which God has given her, is excluded from this mode of worship. Thus the tradition has its permanent misgivings. But the Passion of St. Matthew, as we have for years heard it on Good Friday in St. Thomas's church, Leipzig, is no less ably rendered, and the cathedral choir at Berlin is superior in its young fresh voices to the Pope's chapel. Where Catholic worship has the advantage is that it weaves artistic music into that worship by means of the mass. Yet for this purpose in countries especially Catholic instrumental music in particular is but little used. In Rome itself on the high festivals, if the Pope celebrates high mass in St. Peter's, it is merely the moment when he holds aloft the consecrated Host and the Cup, and when a sacred silence settles over the boundless multitude prostrate on their knees in the presence of God, that is solemnly marked by extremely mild trumpet tones, which, by means of a singular acoustic effect, appear to break upon the lofty dome, and descend as though from heaven.

If Protestantism has no hesitation in putting into a more devotional shape religious oratorios, such as have already for a long time been rendered in its churches, or in introducing liturgical services such as those which for some years have been given during Lent in the



cathedral church at Berlin ; dignified compositions, as a rule of early date, alternating with prayer and the reading of the story of the Passion and of its anticipations in the Old Testament ; we can have the same, so far as there are to be found locally those requisites, which, indeed, even for Catholic churches are only to be had in large towns. The three great masters of Vienna, Haydn<sup>1</sup>, Mozart<sup>2</sup>, and Beethoven<sup>3</sup>, were Catholics, but who regards that ? The art of music has emancipated itself from the Church. Neither Catholicism nor Protestantism has been able to hinder this, nor can it do so in the future ; but both are free, conceding to that art the opportunity of disclosing its highest import, to receive its highest gifts in unfettered service.

I desired merely to demonstrate that the exclusive significance of the Catholic Church for art belongs to a past time, when Catholicism was still coextensive with Christianity ; but now, and in the future that lies clearly before us, the relation of the two Creeds to art, while differing indeed, yet, like that which we are told is the music of the future, is unattended by any essential precedency of the one or the other Church.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Haydn ; died at Vienna, 1809.

<sup>2</sup> Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart ; died at Vienna, 1791.

<sup>3</sup> Ludwig van Beethoven ; died at Vienna, 1827.



## CHAPTER III

### SCIENCE AND LITERATURE

AS Christianity bore within itself the inclination, on the one hand, to bring sooner or later into scientific consciousness the depths of the thoughts which belong to it, and, on the other, to attach itself to the highest secular culture, so even the Catholic Church carried out a part of this destiny, and we have not the least intention of plucking from her the wreath of fame which is her due. Nevertheless, she shared the decline of culture in ancient times, and, after the classics came to be dumb, produced from herself a new classical literature, classical not in form but in substance, that of the Fathers, yielding, if not authoritative teaching, yet rich sources of religious truth for all ages. This did not come to pass without antagonism directed against the learning of Greece, especially its fruit, Greek philosophy. Tertullian, however strongly in conflict his moral sternness was with the laxer ways of the See of Rome, nevertheless in this became the type of Roman procedure. This does not relate to his notorious paradoxes, the laughing-stock of ignorance: 'I believe it, because it is absurd; it is certain, for it is impossible.' These are merely ironical modes of expression to meet a worldly wisdom claimed by his contemporaries, instead of simply saying: 'I believe it, although it presents itself to you as absurd; it has happened, and must have happened' (perhaps referring



to the Resurrection of our Lord) 'in accordance with the law of a higher order of things.' It is thus a saying which reproduces the thought of the Apostle, who boasts of the Divine wisdom as displayed in the Crucified One: 'unto Jews a stumblingblock, and unto Gentiles foolishness.'<sup>1</sup> But Tertullian is a type for the Roman Church of all time, when in his pride as inheritor of perfect truth he pours out his jealousy against heretics. 'If we grant that they are not the foes of truth, how are we to deal with men who actually confess that they are still seeking it. Since they are still seeking it, they have not yet got it. Since they have not got it, they do not believe; they are not Christians. What has Athens in common with Jerusalem, the Academy with the Church, heretics with Christians? Our doctrine is from the Porch of Solomon. Let them look to this who have adduced a Stoic and Platonic and Dialectic Christianity. *After* Christ we have no need of curiosity, *after* the Gospel no need of investigation. Since we believe, we require nothing further in addition to belief.'<sup>2</sup> In the same way, when the first systematized learning on the part of the Church based itself in the shape of scholasticism upon the formulas of Aristotelian philosophy, in order that in the face of all the fanciful ideas of earlier ages the traditional belief of the Church might nevertheless be recognized in its rational and binding character, the Popes threatened to punish the perusal of the writings of Aristotle with excommunication. But as Tertullian carried on the battle against pagan learning, himself equipped with all the culture which it conferred, and as contemporaneously with him a Christian school was founded at Alexandria which maintained that God in

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 23.<sup>2</sup> *De praescript.* cc. 6, 14. [H.]



His goodness sent the prophets to the Jews and in the same way the philosophers to the Greeks, in order that the former might be justified and prepared for the Saviour by the Law and the latter by philosophy; similarly, too, the Roman Church soon yielded to the reverence felt by the Schoolmen for 'the philosopher', who in their view passed as the forerunner of Christ on a level with the Baptist, as the highest human authority, sometimes unconsciously as even above the Divine.

The clergy took diligent heed to the terrible story which St. Jerome relates, that he was caught up before God's throne, and on the charge of being a follower of Cicero, and not of Christ, was severely scourged, and only dismissed at the intercession of the angels on giving an undertaking never again to read pagan books. The holy doctor of the Church did not keep to this very strictly, nor did the clergy. The latter in the earliest stages of the German nations' Christianity were so exclusively the leaders of culture and of teaching that all learning was termed by them 'clergie', i.e. the possession of clerics, even though lay persons had a share in it. So it is said of the sons of Charles the Great that they were great *clerks*. We may in this connexion lament that the legends of Teutonic heroes have almost disappeared, and that even a German literature appearing within the Church, as it shows itself in the Epic of *Heliand*<sup>1</sup>, this Christ who has become genuinely German, in the guise of a gentle popular King, who moves about with His attendants, the Apostles, has never come to maturity; but in this it is merely the paramount influence of the

<sup>1</sup> *Heliand*, the Healer (i.e. the Saviour), an old Saxon epic poem on the Saviour in alliterative verse by an unknown author between the years 822 and 840. It includes old Germanic heathen elements.



Roman Church and speech which has asserted itself, although there are not lacking as well deeds of violence on the part of the hierarchy directed against an intellectual spirit in the Middle Ages. Gottschalk<sup>1</sup>, the monk of Saxony, was compelled by scourging to commit to the flames his writings with proofs from the Epistles of St. Paul and from the writings of St. Augustine, although virtually in support of the most characteristic doctrine of the latter, and he notwithstanding this ended his days miserably in an ecclesiastical dungeon. Abelard<sup>2</sup>, inasmuch as he took the fundamental conceptions of the Schoolmen seriously, and desired to believe only what he could apprehend and to understand the mystery of the Trinity, when at the summit of his fame saw his writings condemned to the fire, and himself to perpetual silence. Roger Bacon<sup>3</sup>, the prophet of the modern investigation and mastery of nature, was rewarded on account of the suspicious novelty of his ideas by languishing for ten long years in a monastic prison. Thus considered, it was not without a mediaeval precedent that Galileo<sup>4</sup> was compelled to forswear on his knees at Rome the revolution of the earth about the sun as an absurd, unscriptural, and heretical belief. It may be merely a poetic addition that as he rose from this perjury he murmured: '*E pur si muove,*' *it moves for all that*; but he certainly *thought* so, and moreover the Inqui-

<sup>1</sup> A German theologian. His doctrine of twofold predestination was condemned by the Synod of Mainz in 848. He died in prison at Hautvilliers circ. 868.

<sup>2</sup> Peter Abelard, prominent among the founders of scholastic theology, condemned at the Council of Sens, 1140; d. 1142.

<sup>3</sup> The celebrated English philosopher; d. 1294. He was twice imprisoned for considerable periods on account of his beliefs.

<sup>4</sup> Galileo Galilei, the famous Italian physicist and astronomer; died near Florence, 1642.



sition, in spite of his recantation, after its fashion condemned him to be imprisoned as long as seemed fit to the Holy Father.

This Inquisition, the dread engine of rule on the part of the Romish Church, since it began to fear for its exclusive dominion, even previous to the Reformation had filled its prisons and stoked its fires. Nevertheless the hierarchy connived at much, where it was not directly attacked, or overlooked it. The literature of the fifteenth century is full of daring thoughts transgressing the limits of ecclesiastical decisions. The second Easter, the resurrection of classical antiquity, which brought back a purely human culture with its beauty and its risk, emerged from the schools of the Church, and was joyfully welcomed by many Church dignitaries. The Mendicant Friars, who with their narrowness of view opposed this new paganism, were ridiculed as obscurantists. It was not till owing to the Reformation men's spiritual tendencies adopted distinct lines of action, and the spirit that was set free from the Romish Church took up a position of estrangement towards her, that a dread of ideas and literature commenced first in Rome. The Roman Index of books forbidden either absolutely, or until they had been expurgated, is the dismal memorial of this dread, a memorial permanent alike in its existence and in its growth. The Mendicant Friars with their warning cry of 'heretics' were now to obtain their due, and the enlightened persons who had trodden victoriously upon them, were condemned in the shape of their writings to eternal silence. Moreover, leaders in the hierarchy themselves were not spared. The older writings of Aeneas Sylvius<sup>1</sup>, although Pius II

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 23.



had recanted everything dubious that was contained in them, and had thus disowned himself, nevertheless were placed upon the Index, and in the same way the Commentaries of Erasmus upon the New Testament, although they had been solemnly approved by Leo X. Nay, Paul IV did not spare the scheme of reformation, in the drawing up of which he had himself taken a part under Paul III. The Inquisition troubled itself little about morals. It persecuted ideas. Paul Sarpi's judgement of it is this: 'Never will there be found a better secret how to stultify men under the pretext of making them more pious.'

This intended destruction of the spiritual function in men could never, it is true, be absolutely carried out, even in Spain and Austria. The books could not well be destroyed unread, albeit this sometimes was the case. Paul IV forbade the reading of heretical books, even for the purpose of refuting them, and strictly reserved this risky enterprise for the General Inquisition. Nevertheless, permission was almost always given to men of learning who could be depended upon—or at any rate their action was connived at—that they should read in order at least that they might know the forces of the enemy. The Jesuits in the Collegio Romano showed me with a proud smile a rich assortment of English, German, and specially French literature, of the worst kind. Moreover, the eminent national reputation of an author does not always permit the prohibition to be put into practice. Dante was surely not a secret heretic and conspirator, as has lately been evinced with warm approval, but the firstborn son of the Church among poets; yet he incurred such terrible condemnation on account of those members of the hierarchy whom he consigns to



destruction, that the authorities would gladly have condemned the *Divina Commedia* at least to Purgatory, if Italy, in union with the whole educated world, had not bestowed upon her poet a renown over which the Pope had no power. The *Decameron* has its place not altogether unduly among prohibited books, but in the old-fashioned part of Italy, where the papal and the Austrian influences are blended, new editions have continually appeared. Boccaccio's <sup>1</sup> marble bust stands on the Capitol, as well as in the stately walk upon the Pincian hill <sup>2</sup>, among other great Italians. Galileo too is to be found there, the marble head of each overshadowed by a young laurel.

The Catholic Church has not ceased to cultivate in her schools historical learning and dialectic subtlety. She had need of both, not only in the conflict with Protestant theology, but in general in order to hold her ground among cultured nations. That conflict moreover, in a spirit of noble rivalry, has called forth many noteworthy works, and thus there has arisen to some extent a compensation for the sacrifice of intellectual freedom, which *we* at least consider to have been made by Catholicism to the Reformation. Amid the confusion of the age following the Reformation, Flacius <sup>3</sup> conceived the idea of a universal history of the Church, constructed altogether from original authorities, and he brought it down to the thirteenth century. From its division into periods of a hundred years it received the title of 'Centuries'. The 'Centuries of Satan' had to be used in the Catholic Church, until they had been replaced by a Catholic history. Baronius <sup>4</sup> thus replaced them, and surpassed them, as

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> One of the seven hills of Rome.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. i. p. 79.



having access to the much richer sources of the Vatican archives. Both works pursue an end which is foreign to history, viz. to bring over the other Church from its unfaithfulness to Christ. Nevertheless, it was by both of them that the Church was brought for the first time to a developed consciousness of her experiences of a thousand years.

The Church of France, owing as much to this rivalry with the reformed theology as to the level which highly cultivated secular literature had attained in that country, had the experience of a classical age of Catholic theology. This took the form of learned editions of the Fathers and collections of original sources of every kind, in particular the work produced at the monastery of St. Maur, of unfettered historical investigations and cultured historical compositions, as well as of Court theology characterized by a lively eloquence. But Pascal<sup>1</sup>, the most intellectual of these writers, in the capacity of one subject to God alone<sup>2</sup>, is at variance with his Vicegerent and the Church as ruled by the Jesuits. Even collectively they availed nought against the advance of an anti-Christian literature, the presage of a revolution which overturned altars as well as throne.

It is not the anarchy and brutality of a revolution but its liberty which supplies the breath of life to learning, so that, shut in by no external limitations, it can extend its grasp to the bounds of human thought. This liberty Catholicism has denied to its theology, which is bound to hold permanently as true all which the Church at such various dates of imperfect develop-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> The expression in the German is an allusion to the independent relation of princes and imperial cities of Germany towards the emperor.



ment and of distress had declared to be true. The Papacy, being at one time accustomed to regulate convictions to order, has by various arbitrary decisions restricted possible movements even within Catholic limits. Creative art, inspired by an abundance of material drawn from ordinary life, and by great national memories, may, even under the Inquisition, experience a quickening influence, although in such an atmosphere the wings of genius are never unfolded to their full compass. It was only upon Protestant soil that Shakespeare could grow up with his world full of characteristic forms, as firm and living as though God Himself had created them, and caused His eternal laws of morality to rule over them. In Spain, on the other hand, Calderon was the only possibility, with his country of marvels full of the perfume of flowers and of incense, full of enthusiasm and bright playfulness, devotion to an ancient Cross cancelling every misdeed even on the part of an unconverted heart, in his moral elevation never getting beyond the sentiment that our serenest happiness is but a dream, and that nought remains to us but the remembrance of happy days. Each of these two, however, was a genius of high endowments.

Fénelon, writing in his *Maxims of the Saints* concerning the inner life, leads back the extravagant affections of the *religieuse*, his friend Madame von Guyon<sup>1</sup>, who could never satisfy herself in the way of paradoxical expressions of self-abnegation before God, to her simple measure of sincere devotion to the Saviour, so as to be insensible to all self-seeking, the attitude set forth in the lives of the best of the saints and in the purest conceptions of the Fathers. It was on the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 39.



Day of the Annunciation. Fénelon was in the act of mounting the pulpit of his cathedral at Cambray, when his brother burst in with the Brief which condemned as erroneous thirty-five sayings in the *Maxims of the Saints*. Fénelon was sorely dismayed, but collected his thoughts, changed the conclusion of his sermon, spoke of the duty of absolute submission to the authority appointed by God, read out the condemnatory Brief, to which he submitted himself as an echo of the Divine will, and accordingly exhorted the congregation to have regard to it. He himself, in an episcopal direction which he issued, condemned his book, forbade it to be read, and burned in the courtyard of his palace the copies which he directed to be brought to him.

We have recognized earlier<sup>1</sup> that Fénelon in the self-abnegation of his humility is just as ideal a type of Catholic methods, as is Luther in Worms (with regard to whom the papal nuncio assures us that he has already taught so much evil that a thousand heretics might be burned for it) an illustrious type of Protestantism. If we compare the two acts together as general types of Christian dealing they may, from a moral point of view, stand equally high, but the deed of the Wittenberg professor, who, under excommunication and proscription, in the presence of the emperor and the representatives of the realm, maintains fearlessly his conviction based upon the word of God, indicates nevertheless a much higher turning-point in the history of mankind than the archbishop's absolute submission in defiance of his own convictions. For to whom did he really submit himself? Even Catholic theology had not up to that time asserted that every

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i, p. 17.



sentence of a Pope with reference to a book is infallible, and by making such an assertion it would expose itself to irrefutable counter-demonstrations. The judgment of the Pope concerning a book or a person is subject to the limitation of a congregation of prelates and learned advisers, and it is to their investigation and its results that individual condemnatory Briefs appeal. In the case before us there was a party at the French Court which considered a thoroughly unselfish love of God, not even for the sake of eternal happiness, to be a dangerous eccentricity. In the next place, there was the jealousy of the other Prince of the Church in France, Bossuet <sup>1</sup> in opposition to Fénelon. This party, favoured by special political circumstances, exercised an influence upon Innocent XII <sup>2</sup>, who, after long opposition, yielded ; while his personal view of the matter was that Bossuet had erred through lack of love to his neighbour, Fénelon through excess of love to God. As though excess in this respect were possible, where its real essence is perceived with such wisdom.

In this way a book was condemned in which not merely every pious Christian, but even every pious Catholic can never fail to find edification, and to such an intrigue did Fénelon submit himself. Nevertheless his action stands high from the moral point of view, inasmuch as it was logical, and so consonant with the whole of his pure life as a priest that he wondered how any one could have been so much as uncertain what was to be done in such a case. He might perhaps have been able to arouse a dangerous mutiny against the Roman See ; in his heart he bowed to its authority. But his conduct, if accepted as a maxim of universal application, would hand over the progress of

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. pp. 18, 149, 243.

<sup>2</sup> Antonio Pignatelli, Pope, 1691-1700.



the human soul in every department of knowledge in any way related to religion to the arbitrary decision of some learned men at Rome, sometimes even to unlearned men and to their passing interests.

In the schools of the Jesuits, on which Catholic countries depended for education till about the middle of the eighteenth century, and in Jesuit literature we have the most general expression of Catholic learned studies since the Reformation. This literature has no lack of learned men, able in their pursuit. In the exact sciences, where religious belief came little in question, some by the thoroughness of their investigations have produced conspicuous results. In the department of moral science, and in particular of theology itself, if we were to single out the following: Mariana<sup>1</sup> with his democratic politics, Bellarmine as a learned controversialist, Suarez<sup>2</sup> and Escobar<sup>3</sup> with the misleading code of morality which belonged to both, saint as the former was; yet the dominant note in these is nothing better than the mediocre and the narrow, even in their historical works, which however, owing to the collections made by means of a society for the space of several generations, have come to be a valuable assemblage of original authorities. They boast now that it was at their motion that the trial of witches was first attacked. Frederick von Spee<sup>4</sup>, who was an agreeable poet as well, dismayed at the innocent confession and consequent execution of a young girl at Würzburg, was indeed almost the first to assail this enormity, but he could only venture upon it anonymously, and became an object of grave suspicion in his Order

<sup>1</sup> Juan de Mariana, a Spanish historian; d. 1623.

<sup>2</sup> Francisco Suarez, a Spanish Jesuit theologian; d. 1617.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 55.

<sup>4</sup> Died at Trier, 1635.



on that account. The spark of genius has never been kindled in this Order, or, at any rate in the case of those who have been trained in its principles, it has been thoroughly extinguished through fear of the fire of punishment. According to the older rule there is required for the completion of theological training a three years' course of the study of philosophy, and nevertheless by the same rule it is directed that in this instruction the leading questions shall not be touched upon. A pretty philosophy that must be! They also laid stress upon this, that their servants did not learn to read, while they referred on this head to a like prohibition on the part of St. Francis. What he intended in saintly simplicity and in order to encourage the same they have carried out in their worldly wisdom. Moreover, they did not teach the people to read. In the old kingdom of Naples, which was so long governed by the Jesuits or in their interests, the proportion of men who could read was two per cent. As they determine, in accordance with the authority of their learned men of former times, what is permissible to *do*, the same is the case as to what is true to *believe*. Their sterility in theological literature since the restoration of the Order is splendidly excused by Father Roh, on the ground that in theology there is virtually nothing left to produce, after so many men of great learning have written upon it! The position is that indicated by the saying of the eloquent Father Klinckowstrom<sup>1</sup>: 'Faith [by this time limited to faith in the Pope] is the sole needful illumination.'

It is a characteristic circumstance that the leading Church writers of France after the Revolution had no

<sup>1</sup> Augustus von Klinckowstrom, a learned Roman Catholic writer, and friend of Möhler at Vienna in the early part of the nineteenth century.



theological training, and that the one who belonged to the ecclesiastical Order broke with the Church. Chateaubriand's<sup>1</sup> *Genius of Christianity* dawned upon France like the rainbow after the Deluge of the Revolution. Viscount Chateaubriand grew up in the infidelity of French *philosophy* wrongly so termed. Through the streams of blood shed in the Revolution, and the tears of his mother, who met with a miserable death, he became a champion of the Church. That avenue to faith is a thorny one, and not always attended by high thinking. 'I wept, and I believed.' But the whole of France had wept, or at any rate had cause for weeping, and a noble section of the people yearned for the consolation of Christianity. Chateaubriand in conformity with his object produced much that was beautiful, appertaining not so much to Catholicism as to Christianity, and in fact generally to a religious frame of mind and habit. He showed how so much in art and science which impressed infidel France is dependent upon Christianity, and how its artistic productions were a match for the highest monuments of classical antiquity. He took sentiments and fancies for thoughts, and high-vaulted cathedrals, painted windows, ivy-grown abbeys for proofs. In this way a clear explanation is forthcoming, both for the striking impression which his writings for a long time made on their sentimental side, and for the fact that the author himself belonged to the section of his nation which was not convinced thereby; for we learn from his *Mémoires d'outre-tombe* that for the whole of his life he vacillated between belief and unbelief, while his heart, or rather his imagination, was the battle ground of the conflicting spirits of two ages, which he was desirous to reunite.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 48.



The Piedmontese diplomat, de Maistre, valued the Catholic Church as being necessary for overcoming revolution, and maintained its dogmas as the expression of the universal laws of the world in terms of the Divine, the Pope as Providence manifested in a personal form. He lived in expectation of an imminent development of Catholicism, a revelation of the Revelation, wherein too religion and science would be reconciled. Yet at times, relapsing from his flights of imagination, he appeared to himself in the Catholic Church like an eagle which beats with its wings against the iron bars of its cage, and, feeling himself to be a son of Italy, notwithstanding his French tongue, he became a prophet of warning on behalf of the national destiny of Piedmont, even at the cost of a royal compact with revolution. In the case of Montalembert<sup>1</sup> we did not find occasion to commend his conscientious investigation of sources as a Church historian; but he applied the gift of brilliant eloquence to the service of his Church, and he sought—in this continuing to be the faithful disciple of Lamennais<sup>2</sup>, while the latter was still able to be true to himself—closely to combine Catholicism, as the patroness of nationalities, with national liberty. Lamennais, at the time when there hung alongside the crucifix only his own portrait, a lithograph, in the cabinet of Leo XII, and when in his conflict with an enemy whose chief strength lay in sluggishness he won a great battle, fought not against opposition to Christianity, but against indifference. In giving Catholic instruction he taught how reason, the object of the search of all antiquity, had come to be personified in the God-Man and in His Vicegerent upon earth, and so demanded the submission of reason

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 72.



as existing merely in individuals. France termed him the last of the Fathers. But when, troubled at the mischief wrought by a Church which had sold itself to royal favour, he desired one which should revert to the poverty and freedom of the apostolic pattern, but which, however, found no sort of favour in the eyes of the successor of the Prince of the Apostles; then from compassion at the misery of the people he proceeded to deify them, and beheld the Papacy as standing on one side and humanity on the other.

The French Church of the present day is not wanting either in controversial or in instructive literature. Dupanloup<sup>1</sup>, bishop of Orleans, with his fine academic culture, after growing cool during the Vatican Council, again warmly exerted himself on behalf of the sway of clerical interests as regards France, while Veuillot<sup>2</sup>, who, like Julian the Apostate<sup>3</sup>, desired to exclude pagan classical writers from the instruction of Christian youth, and found them prejudicial to moral training in schools, as lay patron of the Pope, with the scourge of his paper, the *Univers*, also kept the bishops of France in the fear of the Lord. An edition of the Fathers, reaching almost to four hundred volumes, appeared. In fulfilment of the dream of the new Benedictines at Solesmes<sup>4</sup>, some fragments of ancient ecclesiastical writings in the possession of a learned cardinal were brought to light. In addition to these, an apostolic missionary and honorary canon of a cathedral published, at the expense of the State, the waste book of a young German backwoodsman, as though it contained the first symbolic tokens used in the written language of the American Redskins! But the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 348.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 249.

<sup>3</sup> See p. 173.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 60.



really scholarly work of Renan<sup>1</sup> on Canticles, after so many solemn and quixotic attempts in the same direction, attained at once a place of honour in the Roman Index, even before his novel like book on the Life of Christ. The theological faculty of Paris, formerly the highest learned authority of the world, was again established<sup>2</sup> at the Sorbonne, but almost without students. Its dean, Maret, bishop of Sura, in a manner not unworthy of the learned Gallicans of early days, defended the liberties of the Church against the sole domination of the Papacy, and then bowed before the infallible Pope.

The universities with their freedom and width of culture, in former times the favourite children of the mediaeval Church, are, in the eyes of Catholicism as understood by the Jesuits, equivalent to institutions of the devil and the rotten haunts of heretics. The clergy of the Latin races are for the most part trained in the prisonlike air of episcopal seminaries, yet with a view to a practical and edifying activity, which exercises a constant power upon the peasantry and over women. To secure a riddance from modern culture as a whole by the exercise of a Roman control over learning, the bishops of Belgium founded a university established and dominated by them. This Catholic university at Louvain is their reward as joint authors of the revolution by which Catholic Belgium was cut off from Protestant Holland<sup>3</sup>. Inasmuch as at the German universities Catholic theological faculties were established, and the frequenting of these formed by custom or law part of the training of the

<sup>1</sup> The French philosopher and historian, leader of the school of critical philosophy in that country; d. 1892.

<sup>2</sup> By Napoleon I.

<sup>3</sup> In 1831.



clergy, bishop Ketteler<sup>1</sup> agreed to abolish altogether the theological faculty at Giessen. With grander aspirations the general assembly of the Catholic Union at Aachen in 1862 determined to found for Germany, after the model of Louvain, a free Catholic university, such that every branch of learning might be represented in complete independence of the secular authority, in harmony with the Divine revelation, and in conformity with Catholic dogma. The teachers, of whom the German episcopate have the sole appointment, are solemnly to swear to the Tridentine Confession of faith, and by occasional repetition of this solemnity maintain their fidelity to the Catholic belief. The youth, in the monastic propriety of the old lodging-houses, are to be trained to Catholic humility and loyalty, without the danger for their souls' welfare which threatens them at the old State universities, even those which are by rights exclusively Catholic. A board of delegates was forthwith established at Aachen, and a programme and an appeal to the devotion of Catholic people put out. Subscriptions were entered, and all priests admonished to say at least a mass for the success of the undertaking. The Holy Father bestowed his blessing upon the project, and the archbishop of Cologne, with two other bishops, was named as his representative for carrying out this matter, which was welcomed as a great Catholic move, 'at which every Catholic heart rejoices, the provision of a Catholic academy, the crown of all conflicts on behalf of the freedom of the Church.' Nevertheless a doubt presented itself that secular branches of learning, as depending upon natural knowledge and on specific principles, when placed directly under hier-

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 292.



archical control, might not thrive particularly well, and that the principle of directing the course of all branches of learning in conformity with Catholic dogma in its all-embracing twilight is simply calculated with a view to exploiting it for party ends. Such doubts indeed were only expressed individually and with much hesitation. Yet even though we take into consideration German parsimony in offering voluntary contributions for great national aims, the slender amount forthcoming for this object seems to show that those doubts were widely spread throughout Catholic circles. So much was this the case that already there was heard a dejected suggestion to commence with only the faculty of law, or to apply the money provisionally for the maintenance of young teachers, especially of *Privatdocenten*<sup>1</sup>, who are willing to pledge themselves to Catholic interests. The Countess Hahn-Hahn requested contributions from women in order to set bounds to the unprecedented fickleness of the male sex, and there went forth from the assemblage of bishops at Fulda in October, 1869, an appeal which announces the more limited and definite object of establishing provisionally at the tomb of St. Boniface<sup>2</sup>, far from the distracting tumult of the world, a theological and a philosophical faculty with their many lines of teaching. The clerical party in France in 1875 obtained from the National Assembly, with a view to the establishment of institutions for higher education, permission to confer academical degrees, this being represented as a matter which concerned freedom. The bishops, with the aid of the wealth possessed by

<sup>1</sup> Private teachers, as contrasted with those holding official positions as professors at a German university.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 396.



the faithful, forthwith founded Catholic universities in Lille and Paris, at first with single faculties, the Pope appointing the Chancellor. There as free universities, like those of the Middle Ages, they contemplate the domination of public opinion and of the intelligence of the age. But they have to bring this intelligence into accord with the infallible Pope and his Syllabus, with the rules of the Index, and with the *Civiltà Cattolica*. Their freedom is the absolute slavery of learning, inasmuch as it is brought back to the standpoint of Roman scholasticism. There could scarcely be found, at least among genuine Germans of learning, a philosopher, an historian, or an investigator of nature, who bound himself never to investigate or teach anything which an episcopal committee could deem in any way dangerous in its results to Catholic dogma. In Belgium, among a people almost exclusively Catholic, the Catholic university does its part in maintaining the severance between a papal and a liberal section of the population. The threatening consequences have hitherto been mostly averted through the wisdom of a Protestant monarchy. But in a country whose power and prosperity depend upon Catholics and Protestants dwelling peacefully side by side, the public authority, which should provide the means for such a Catholic university, would be guilty of high treason. If it is founded purely through the power of a hierarchy, it must be borne with for the credit of the true freedom of the State, but without any civil recognition of its courses of study, its examinations, and its academic degrees.

The clergy have from time to time treated the command of our Lord: 'Go ye, and teach (make disciples of) all (the) nations,'<sup>1</sup> as though authorizing

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.



the teaching of the whole mediaeval *trivium*<sup>1</sup> and *quadrivium*<sup>2</sup>, in order to deprive them, along with some other branches of learning, of all freedom. Moreover, notwithstanding all the disapproval felt by the bishops of the country towards our universities, these pillars of German science and nationality, they have nevertheless for the most part shown sufficient interest in them to demand power, at least over the professors of history and philosophy, in order that thus a Catholic history and philosophy may be taught. It was with a menacing absence of definiteness that Pius IX rejected the idea that higher education, with the sole exception of the episcopal seminaries, should be under the full control of the government. With regard to intermediate education there is no lack of testimony that the gymnasia of the Jesuits in particular, even till our day in Austria, have done little to awaken the intellectual faculty, to impart moral strength, and, apart from dexterity in the use of monkish Latin, to introduce men to the world of classical writers. Protestantism, from which almost everywhere in the case of mixed populations improvement in schools has proceeded, knows nothing of those claims in connexion with religious instruction and elementary schools. Moreover, it has no desire to dominate these by spiritual influence, but only to have its share of their control in regular partnership with the State, the community, and the family. It requires for the disciples of learning, and for the future ministers of the Church in particular, no artificial atmosphere, but commits them with confidence to the stream of general culture and to unfettered research. When the

<sup>1</sup> Grammar, rhetoric, dialectic.

<sup>2</sup> Arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy.



Württemberg Convention with the concurrence of the Pope placed the professors of the Catholic faculty at Tübingen under the arbitrary control of the bishop of Rottenburg—the predecessor in office of the existing bishop had once in a funeral discourse cited a passage from the *third* Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians!—the senate of the university in 1857 resolved that in that case they were no longer to be considered as representatives of unfettered learning, and that accordingly they were unfit to remain as members of the senate. This might appear a harsh proceeding towards colleagues who were undoubtedly distinguished for their learning and culture, but the intention was merely to render this whole Concordat impossible. Teachers who were compelled to lecture within the limits of a sanctioned syllabus, and were liable any day to be dismissed by a priest, would certainly no longer correspond to the German conception of the lustre of academic independence. In Rome there still existed at least an academic teaching in theology, but the favoured theological faculty, in which so many youths were trained from the other side of the Alps, was transferred to the Collegio Romano, i.e. was handed over to the Jesuits. There upon the working days, year out year in, two hours were given to dogmatics, half an hour to Church law, half an hour to Church history, all through the medium of Latin. As to anything further, such as exposition of Scripture, I received no information. Duties connected with the altar are learned in the seminaries. What is the purport of the dogmatics—a four-year course, which the new arrivals of each year enter upon—we perceive from the nine volumes of Perrone's prelections. Doubtless in them there is no lack of passages from Holy Scripture and



from the Fathers, but torn from their context, and quoted and expounded in support of a theory.

Rome however, since the middle of the fifteenth century, has been a leading seat of ecclesiastical learning. Some monkish Orders here, especially the Dominicans, were possessed of considerable libraries administered on hospitable principles. The Vatican library is the most noteworthy in the world in the way of manuscripts. The Vatican archives contain the richest sources for Church history. Among our own contemporaries we saw learned cardinals and men who had attained that position on account of their scholarship, as Mezzofanti<sup>1</sup>, who possessed the Pentecostal gift of tongues, and Angelo Mai<sup>2</sup>, who was at home in the art of tracing out beneath the upper writing of monkish edifying treatises the half-obliterated original relating to matters of ecclesiastical or secular interest in the old world: only the publication of the treasures found out by him directly and indirectly, even including the most valuable possession of the library, has been somewhat scanty. The Barnabite Vercellone<sup>3</sup>, in his noble edition of the Latin Bible, reconciled as far as was possible the traditional text with the demands of learning, while his conscientious statement of the many variants made the uncertain condition of the text more evident than can have been pleasing to the Roman view. The English cardinal Wiseman<sup>4</sup>, to be reckoned here in consideration of his thoroughly Roman training, exercised his fine talents in interweaving the

<sup>1</sup> Giuseppe Mezzofanti, d. 1849. He is said to have spoken fifty-eight languages.

<sup>2</sup> d. 1854.

<sup>3</sup> The Barnabites were an order of clergy for preaching, education, &c., founded at Milan, and confirmed by Clement VII in 1533.

<sup>4</sup> Archbishop of Westminster and theologian; d. 1865.



oldest memories and monuments of Roman Christianity with the emotional views of modern Catholicism, and in his *Reminiscences of the last four Popes* he succeeded in throwing a gentle light over the figure of Gregory XVI himself. The three Italian priests, Gioberti<sup>1</sup>, Rosmini<sup>2</sup>, and Ventura<sup>3</sup>, according to whose enthusiastic hopes there was dawning for Italy new glory, under the blessing of the Papacy and to its glorification, shared in its fall, were subjected to Roman censorship, and died abroad.

The modest number of theologians in the metropolis of Christianity whose reputation extends beyond their own borders is excused by the assurance that not a few of them left behind excellent works, but only in a manuscript form; and this explanation is certainly consistent with the old-fashioned condition of the Italian book-trade and the dread of the censure. Thus we are permitted to deem these writings which have remained in obscurity as in the highest degree eminent. Perrone, teacher of dogmatics at the Collegio Romano, using the universal language of the Church, instructed orally as well as through his prolix work the theological students of all Catholic nations in the mysteries of the faith, and taught them to storm against heretics. His ignorance of German theological literature, which he loved to assail as the theology of Antichrist, though pointed out to him earlier, yet even in the latest emended impressions of his work still holds its ground to a considerable extent. There, for example, he has nothing to say of Schleiermacher except that he, Court preacher to the King of Prussia and a disciple of Luther (of which assertions the one is no more true than the other), affirmed in 1820 that the Bible teaches

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 337.<sup>2</sup> See vol. i. p. 193.<sup>3</sup> See p. 379.



the Godhead of Christ, and in 1835 (this being a year after his death!) that it denies that Godhead. There too he characterizes Ranke<sup>1</sup>, from whose conspicuous acquaintance with documentary sources and grand impartiality they might learn much at Rome, as an ignorant, crafty, deceitful calumniator of the Popes. Nevertheless Perrone possesses no slight merit in spreading abroad the truth, in that he has indefatigably put on record all objections of which he heard to Catholic dogma, and thus brings them under the notice of the public, merely of course for the purpose of opposing them. The knight de Rossi<sup>2</sup> with learned circumspection disclosed the mystery of the Catacombs, those primitive spots of Christian sepulture and worship, and the first volume of his old Christian inscriptions at the universal exhibition in London formed as worthy a token of Roman scholarship as of typography. Moreover, Tosti, the monk of Monte Cassino, may, according to the traditional view, be reckoned to Rome, although he ranks the Papacy too high to be bound down by the possession of a small principality. He united an ideal view of Church history with the foundation study of documents. In the library of his monastery there no longer lies as in the days of Petrarch<sup>3</sup> dust and mould upon the manuscripts, but these parchments, as many of them as are rescued from the Middle Ages, lie open, well cared for and in orderly arrangement, to every learned use. Lastly, Augustin Theiner of the Oratorio, after some impassioned writings as works of penance and testimonies to his conversion from liberal to papal Catholicism, as the

<sup>1</sup> Leopold von Ranke, the German historiographer; died at Berlin, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> Giovanni Battista de Rossi, an Italian archaeologist; d. 1894.

<sup>3</sup> Francesco Petrarca, the celebrated Italian poet; died at Arquà near Padua, 1374.



loyal guardian of the documentary treasures of the Vatican, employed this position, unique of its kind, with German industry and German scholarship, in order, as the compeer and successor of Baronius and through the publication of the great collections of original authorities, to make accessible those dead treasures of learning and of the Church itself. These costly works did not for the most part appear, as was formerly usual, at the Pope's expense and from the public printing office; but, the Pope being no longer a recipient of alms, Theiner had already perceived that this literary activity was contingent upon his helping himself. He had a press sent him from Germany, and bought quantities of paper. Among the Swiss guard were found ready workers, compositors, printers, binders, and thus in a remote tower of the Vatican, the official residence of the prefect of the archives, there arose the brisk working of a small printing-press in the interests of learning, receiving from time to time support from some prelates of national churches with whose records it was dealing. This is the significance of the Vatican appearing in print upon the title-page of these works. In his history of Clement XIV (in 1853) he re-established the reputation of the most deserving of respect among modern Popes against the vengeance of the Jesuits, and thus drew the wrath of this Order upon himself. Nevertheless, he twice refused a cardinal's hat that he might continue his studies as a private student. At length, coming under the displeasure of the Vatican Council, he was successfully overthrown, and the door which led from the prefect's dwelling to the archives has been walled up.

The mode in which the papal archives had to be guarded from every profane eye even by a prefect like Theiner, while other State archives obligingly open to



historical research their records no longer of any present interest, and the mode in which the head of a Church had to guard secrets of the kingdom of heaven, which by rights ought as far as might be to be proclaimed from the housetops, proves either much needless anxiety or an evil conscience with regard to the proceedings of his forbears. Moreover, the Vatican library, in spite of the personal courtesy of its director, was managed with a punctiliousness and narrowness scarcely equalled by another on earth. Inspection of the catalogue was forbidden on principle; permission to make notes and copies from manuscripts was dependent upon special favour and recommendation: there were but three working hours a day, and owing to a mass of holy days and vacations the whole year was cut down to ninety-three working days.<sup>1</sup>

The Papacy a free press cannot endure: this clumsily worded sentence can be parsed in either of two ways: the experience on making trial of the latter, which Pius IX underwent when he shared the dream of the political freedom of the States of the Church, was not a happy one. Theiner, it is true, in his work upon the importance of the States of the Church, termed the freedom of the press the sacred Palladium, nay, the characteristic stamp and vitality belonging to free populations; but this very work bore upon its title-page permission to be printed on the part of not less than three censors, although in the case of one of them transmuted into a formal expression of thanks and good wishes. He who can permit can also forbid. The strictest censorship, practised in Rome from the time of Alexander VI, Gregory XVI pronounced to be fundamentally necessary in the interests

<sup>1</sup> Substantial improvements in these respects were introduced by Leo XIII.



of the Church, and this in the sense of the ten rules passed by the Council of Trent with regard to forbidden books, according to which the printing of every book within a diocese was to be contingent upon the previous permission of the bishop and the inquisitor. Moreover the bishop was, by means of delegates, from time to time to visit the presses and bookshops. Pius IX, too, thus admonished the bishops in his Whitsuntide discourse: 'Never cease to keep far from the faithful the contagion of that plague; that is to say, permit no injurious books and magazines to be either read or seen by them.' It is pretty obvious what Pope and bishops understand by this 'plague', which moreover is spread by Bible Societies.<sup>1</sup>

The ecclesiastico-political journal, the *Civiltà Cattolica*, came into existence in 1849 at Portici, when Pius IX lived there in exile, in order to rescue Catholicism from all the turmoil of the times. It was expelled from Naples by a monarchical ebullition on the part of the former king, and came to be published by the Jesuits in Rome, while in fact, owing to the favour of the Pope, it was almost independent of the hierarchy of the Order, and edited with equal intelligence and success, to which the agreeable tendency stories of Bresciani, of the Italian Tirol, in particular contributed. The transference of the *Civiltà* to Germany was but of short duration; in that country the *Historico-political Leaves*, in which there still continues to roll something of the thunders of old Görres, take its place, only without the popular

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written a fundamental change has been brought about by Leo XIII with regard to all the Vatican collections of documents and manuscripts. We may add that the attitude of the Papacy towards the press has not been altered by the learned Pope. [Note in editions subsequent to the author's death.]



circulation. Moreover, ever since 1849, in German countries there have come into existence periodicals for the furtherance of the various methods and aims of the Catholic Church. That they are far from being a match for the non-Catholic daily press has been acknowledged at many meetings of the Catholic Unions, and methods of improvement have been considered and dealt with in brochures which, though declaring, it is true, that 'one sister of mercy is more effective than ten newspaper writers', yet showed great yearning for the latter. We should at any rate say that one sister of mercy in the sight of God is of more value than ten newspaper writers; and even that would not be always right. In particular, there existed in German countries a longing daily to emphasize Catholic points of view in regard to all the occurrences of ordinary life, after the manner of a great independent political journal. The *Cölner Volkshalle* (1848-55) was needlessly disciplined out of existence by Manteuffel's<sup>1</sup> administration. The *Deutschland* of Frankfort, which rose phoenix-like from its ashes (1856-58), met with a sad and speedy end owing to financial difficulties and disagreements, but came to life again in the *Cölnische Blätter*, which represents, after an excursion into a freer atmosphere as the *Cölnische Volkszeitung*, with thorough intelligence and strictness Catholic interests. The old *Augsburger Postzeitung* is considered, even by those in agreement with its own principles, to be much too old-fashioned and tedious. Consultations have always resolved themselves into this: 'The bishops are to give their blessing to the Catholic press, and the clergy

<sup>1</sup> Baron Otto Theodor von Manteuffel, Prussian prime minister, 1850-8; d. 1882.



to procure subscribers ; then all will go right.' From the centre of German Catholicism there came the frank confession : ' The literary results of the severance in belief have reduced us to the position of a minority of the population, with very feeble stability. We have neither actively nor passively the numbers requisite to maintain properly great journals, neither the writers nor the readers.' Almost at every Catholic general assembly since 1865 it has been resolved to found Catholic press-bureaus, to be supported by the contributions of the nobility, the superior clergy, and the well-to-do laity. This shows the regard in which they hold the ' Grossmacht Presse', which it is desired to control, only that this has come into existence altogether self-aided in the interests of the general life of Protestants, for sway over whom they are sighing. Faithful endeavour has, however, succeeded in obtaining a great number of small Catholic papers, which in their mass exercise an influence, while they receive their contents from a secret press-bureau, or, like the *Bayrische Vaterland* (Sigl), attack in an independent way and in brisk and rough language everything in Catholicism which differs from themselves, and their native country into the bargain. In front of them there walks with Catholic banner the *Germania*, comprising everything which contends on the side of the Vatican against modern culture and German sentiment, not without the admixture of miraculous stories, appearances of the Madonna, and exorcisms of Satan. A cycle of brochures, issued for Catholic Germany since 1866 through a bookshop, too sketchy for the educated and not sufficiently popular for the uneducated, was nevertheless not without a narrowing influence upon a clerical view of history and the world. At the General Assembly at Düsseldorf in 1869 the



proposal of Brentano to recommend to the press of Southern Germany a greater moderation and more dignified attitude, was rejected with contemptuous scorn. As early as 1870 the archbishop of Cologne put forth a warning on the subject of the *Rheinischer Merkur* of that city.

Unmistakably, German Catholic theology joined to the writing of history has received for wellnigh a century a powerful impetus. No less unmistakably has Protestant learning had a decided influence in this direction, first in its predominant free rationalizing method, shared by a generation of Catholic authors, who, held in high esteem in their lifetime, are now regarded as no more than duly Catholic, and in the second place in its more attractive and devout mode of treatment. The effect of their writings was distinguished by an altogether personal element, so far as it was seceders from the Protestant Church who took over its culture with them. Count Stolberg<sup>1</sup>, brought to the feet of the Papacy through his need of self-surrender as well as by his aristocratic sentiments, infused into the Catholic Church new confidence in her Scriptural character and in her great past. The Romantic school, which grew up in the Protestant North, jesting at the vanity of all things in comparison with the dignity belonging to the ego alone, gave a poetic glory to the Middle Ages. In the gradual isolation of the ego that glorification might easily take a serious and prosaic form, and Frederick Schlegel<sup>2</sup>, the friend of Schleiermacher's youth, contributed to the national Church of Austria his permanently valuable views of

<sup>1</sup> There were two brothers of this name, both distinguished German poets; they both died in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Wilhelm Friedrich von Schlegel, a noted German poet, author, and critic; died at Dresden, 1829.



history, which were allowed to pass as Catholic, while Goethe mockingly said :

Kisses of wantons sought he once to win ;  
With Maries now 'tis his desire to sin.

Zacharias Werner<sup>1</sup>, in his blend of over-spirituality and excess of appeal to the senses, after he had written his drama of the hero of the Reformation and his worthy spouse, atoned for the *Consecration of Power* by a wretched consecration of weakness, and satisfied as a pungent preacher the religious needs of the Vienna Congress. Hurter<sup>2</sup>, impressed by the figure of a great mediaeval Pope, perceived in the Papacy the rock, not that on which the vessel of the Church threatens to be wrecked, but that destined for the deliverance of the nations from the storms of revolution. The chief pastor at Schaffhausen wrote a history of Austria. Philipps<sup>3</sup> supplied Catholicism with the German history of Canon law, and in the same way many a convert besides brought Protestant offerings which attained so high a reputation that lately there has even been heard in Catholic quarters the caution : 'Let us beware of idolizing converts.'

Others, though born Catholics, have nevertheless been trained under the influence of Protestant theology, e.g. Möhler, who, endowed with natural attractions whose breath is superior to that of incense, understood so splendidly how to adapt Catholic dogma

<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Ludwig Zacharias Werner, a German dramatist and poet ; died at Vienna, 1823.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Emanuel von Hurter, a Swiss historian and a secret and afterwards open convert to Rome from Protestantism, the chief pastor at Schaffhausen ; d. 1865.

<sup>3</sup> Georg Philipps, a German jurist and Roman Catholic historian ; d. 1872.



to the universal needs of mankind, and to throw the sunbeams of ideas into the dulness of a doctrinal definition, was in the main stirred up by Schleiermacher. This relation of dependence can still be distinctly shown in individual books. The Church history by Alzog<sup>1</sup> is by far the most widely used handbook on that subject in the German Catholic Church. It owes quite as much to the influence of Möhler's spirit as to the model supplied by my Church history, both as regards the form and view taken (only that the latter is, so far as needful, altered to suit Catholic ideas), and in the case of numerous individual passages. This was recognized even in Catholic journals. At first the alterations were not always successful. In general the style, it might almost be said the mode of thought, was curiously clumsy. But with each revision this book became more effective, and in order to appraise rightly its merits from the Catholic standpoint, one needs only to compare it with the monstrosities of the Church history which appeared at the same time by Annegarn, professor at the Hosianum in Braunsberg.

The Catholic Church has not properly any natural tendency to develop many branches of theology, although such developments have arisen through the mental energy which is inherent in Christianity, or owing to the opposition of Protestantism. She certainly stood in need of history, and Catholic investigations have of late thrown light upon many an obscure historical figure, although even in this Protestant historians have gone in advance or proceeded with candour side by side; but there always lies near the Catholic

<sup>1</sup> Johannes Alzog, a German Roman Catholic Church historian; d. 1878.



historian the temptation to substitute for facts, which are often disagreeable, the glorification of the hierarchy; to put what is edifying in the place of what is vexatious, or with a pious faith in miracles to obscure the real historical sequence of events. Criticism when applied to the miracles of acknowledged saints is reckoned as impiety, and, if there has taken place canonization on the ground of distinctly recognized miracle stories, as rebellion against the pronouncement.

The history of dogma has from the Catholic point of view an interest which is absolutely in the teeth of history itself, viz. to show that a modification in dogmas does not take place, but that the Church, contending only against heretics, has ever remained consistent with herself. This is a principle upon which the Schoolmen down to Bellarmine lay stress in determining the antiquity of an ecclesiastical institution, such as indulgences and the Sacrifice of the mass, since, if they were not of Divine appointment and had not always existed, the Church would certainly have left the right track owing to the innovation. Yet more artless is Perrone's avowal: 'The belief which prevails at present is the surest criterion by which to recognize what has been the belief of the Church in each century.' The Vulgate dispenses from all anxieties with regard to the original Hebrew and Greek texts of Holy Scripture, as the same theologian admits with equal candour and logic: 'Catholics are not so very solicitous as to the criticism and interpretation of Holy Scripture. For they themselves, to put the matter in a word, have the fabric already prepared and complete, and stand firm and secure in its possession.' As he, in common with other Catholic authors, has, e.g., left it at least



undecided in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, whether the Peter who was rebuked by St. Paul at Antioch was the Apostle or another disciple, we have sufficient evidence that the learned Jesuit was solicitous about something quite different from the right understanding of Holy Scripture.

If, nevertheless, Catholic theology north of the Alps, as it has for more than a generation established itself conspicuously in Tübingen, Munich, and Bonn, has addressed itself vigorously to these departments as well, and has produced much work on a par with Protestant theology, we may yet readily recognize it. Even where the new methods of learning are employed against Protestant tenets, all mental energy and freedom are in the end akin to Protestantism.

The more severely has this impulse of Catholic theology been hit by the fresh blows arbitrarily inflicted in the shape of Roman prohibition. The first attack of the kind was directed against the school of Hermes<sup>1</sup>. It was not in this respect of very great importance according to the standard of German learning, and presented a posthumous mixture of the doctrines of Wolf<sup>2</sup> and Kant<sup>3</sup>. Hermes's aim was, starting from doubt, to demonstrate the Catholic dogmas, and he intended to succeed in demonstrating them; but, being an able personality as teacher in Münster and Bonn, a fresh breath of life was imparted by him to the clergy of Westphalia and on the Rhine,

<sup>1</sup> Georg Hermes, a German Roman Catholic theologian, founder of the system of Hermesianism, a rationalizing theory of the relation of reason to faith; d. 1831.

<sup>2</sup> Christian von Wolf, a celebrated German philosopher and mathematician; d. 1754.

<sup>3</sup> Immanuel Kant, the celebrated German philosopher, one of the most influential thinkers of modern times: founder of the 'critical philosophy'; d. 1804.



and many divines of high reputation termed themselves his followers. After his death and that of his patron, Archbishop Spiegel of Cologne, there suddenly appears in vague language a papal condemnation of his teaching and prohibition of his writings. The theological faculty in Bonn (with the exception of a newly appointed member), known to be aiming at the establishment of the Hermes school, had recourse for a while to the method of no longer mentioning by name 'the great teacher', of no longer introducing his textbooks into their lectures, and of studying them the more diligently at home, till at last, owing to the consistency of Catholicism and the embarrassments of the Prussian Government, the school of Hermes nevertheless succumbed. Soon after this the teaching of a meritorious French theologian Bautain<sup>1</sup>, who taking the contrary line of a religion of sentiment, desired to exclude altogether from theology dry intellectual demonstration, in the interest of the latter suffered condemnation which had its origin in Rome. The last followers of Hermes complained that the Pope's sentence upon Bautain condemned precisely the opposite of that which had been condemned in Hermes. The inconsistency of the two papal sentences is not so directly evident. Notwithstanding in Hermes the intellectual, in Bautain the mystical line of theology was condemned, whereas hitherto in the Catholic Church they existed harmlessly side by side.

While German theologians appropriated in varying amount from the later culture in philosophy, and the investigation of history and of nature, as much as appeared compatible with Catholic dogma, or even applicable to its defence, others shrank back when they

<sup>1</sup> Bautain, a Roman Catholic philosopher ; d. 1884.



contemplated the scope and profundity of this modern culture. They saw salvation in the harking back to the learning of the time when the Church's sway was still omnipotent over all the relationships of life. From the Jesuits, in particular, originated the school of the *new scholasticism*, which desired to bind all Catholic learning by an oath of obedience to St. Thomas Aquinas. The conflict between these two schools in their various subdivisions has been carried to the most bitter extent. Catholic theology of the present day has not the peaceful complexion which Cardinal Wiseman chose to ascribe to it, and every suspicious weakness to which faith found itself subjected at the hands of learning, met with a ready audience in Rome. In that conflict of schools the papal See decidedly took sides with the new scholasticism. For this reason it was that in Rome even Günther<sup>1</sup> could be denounced as uncatholic. This solitary thinker and sufferer had grown old in his search for a truly Christian philosophy, from which all pagan elements should be eliminated. He yearned moreover, almost after the manner of Jean Paul<sup>2</sup>, for so brilliant a glorification of the Catholic Church, that he came to be called among us the Roman Court-philosopher. The undertaking, even in opposition to a dominant pantheistic philosophy, to make ecclesiastical dogmas concerning Divine mysteries accessible to reason, ever incurs the risk of altering a little the meaning of these doctrines. After long debate there issued in 1857 from the Congregation of the Index,

<sup>1</sup> Anton Günther, a German philosopher and Roman Catholic theologian; d. 1863.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Paul Friedrich Richter, a celebrated German humorist with a taste for theology; d. 1825.



a condemnatory decision, which denounces all errors, but especially this, that philosophy is seeking to withdraw itself from the worship of the Virgin. Günther humbly submitted. Moreover, in prohibiting the last writings of Lasaulx, who, plunged in pious symbolism, as a philologist after the fashion of the Alexandrine Fathers preferred the Greeks to the Jews, and advanced Socrates somewhat near to Christ, the boast was made that before his death he had submitted himself to the judgement of the Church. He did this in the anticipation of approaching storms. It is possible that errors were to be found in his writings in proportion to the magnitude of the problems dealt with, and they were bound at Rome to find them in the interests of the Catholic Church, so that on this account they might place them upon the Index, and that he might regard this judgement as a deliberate one, in case he should cherish the belief that measures of this kind by way of protection to the Catholic Church were out of season.

The significant circumstance is not the immediate effect of these condemnatory decrees against books and theological methods, which otherwise would be transitory, but the spirit which is involved in such forceful dealing towards learning. Instead of giving free scope to scientific proceedings and the mutual action of mind upon mind, in the assurance that as these conflicts emerge from time, so they will pass away with it and only lead men to a deeper acquaintance with truth, the Pope desires to decide irrefragably not merely with regard to a particular dogma, but with regard to scientific methods themselves, how something is to be taught, and what other methods of teaching are to be condemned to a perpetual silence.



The opposition which the hierarchy of the Middle Ages had to bear was of a very different order.

It will be remembered how those authoritative decisions are brought about in Rome. What do they know there of the progress of German learning? But some one or other from Germany itself, either under the pressure of conscience or upon other grounds, gives information in Rome with regard to a dangerous method of teaching. If the matter or person seems of sufficient importance, it is handed over to the Congregation of the Index for investigation. This consists of some referees and a large number of councillors, who collectively establish the facts of the case and prepare the decision, which is then passed by some cardinals and confirmed by the Pope. Not only are books condemned and adjudged to be destroyed because they are in conflict with doctrines of the faith, and are heretical, but also those which contain opinions that are merely erroneous, having a savour of heresy, giving offence, daring, or displeasing to pious ears; and even St. Hilary in his time had occasion to remark how sensitive Roman ears are. As long as the Dominicans were paramount in the Congregation of the Index as an appendage of the Inquisition, the Jesuits at times resisted its decision, and reissued books prohibited by it, fortified by royal authority. But since the two Orders joined hands over the hostile tendencies of the age, they are dominant, though not in point of numbers, within this Congregation, and are resolved to grant validity to the scholasticism of St. Thomas alone in the way of ecclesiastical learning. If the condemnation is devoid of any method for refutation and rehabilitation in the interests of the living, yet the Index is not



incapable of amendment through the force of time. Since 1616 the writings of Copernicus<sup>1</sup> stood in this list of prohibited books: 'since Copernicus's system of the universe is altogether contradictory to the sacred Writings, and destructive of Catholic truth.' The same was the case with Galileo and other scientists of the heavens. In the impression of the Roman Index issued in 1835, these prohibitions silently disappeared. Even Bellarmine's great work stood for some years upon the Index, perhaps not precisely from tenderness towards Protestantism, but on account of certain liberties which he had taken in his attack upon it. The proceedings of the Congregation are secret as the *Vehmgericht*. They have the option of hearing the author of a book that is denounced, if he is a person eminent for learning, or even of appointing him an advocate out of their number. If the latter course is taken, the person condemned has no knowledge of the matter, and it may be that it is only from the adverse decision that he learns the charge. Formerly, and by express direction in a Brief of Benedict XIV in 1753, the condemnation dealt merely with the book as a warning to the faithful against it, and addressed itself to the author only indirectly (*oblique*): he therefore had no need to trouble himself further about it. For the last thirty years it has become customary to acquaint Catholic authors with the decision before it has been made public (moreover even in this case without stating the reasons), and propounding the question whether they desire to submit themselves. This is reckoned as a special favour, in order to give the author an opportunity of purging himself at once from the

<sup>1</sup> Copernicus, the founder of modern astronomy; d. 1543.



suspicion of an irreligious intent. It arose from the consciousness that the authoritative utterance of the Pope can only be rendered safe if the author's humble acknowledgement can be published at the same time. If he has commendably submitted, the justice of the decision that his book should at least from a moral point of view be cancelled, is thus recognized. He who reads or possesses a prohibited book, which is convicted or suspected of false doctrines, is subject at once to excommunication. If the reason of the prohibition is a comparatively slight one (for there exist certain degrees in this matter), he nevertheless commits a mortal sin, and is to be severely punished in accordance with the judgement of the bishop.

The cardinals in the Congregation of the Index do not read German books. They do not even understand the language. Cardinal Reisach alone might be able to supply some information about them. The decision lies for the most part in the hands of one of the theological advisers. Whom have they had as a real expert since the time of the condemnations which have been adduced? Theiner would have had quite sufficient knowledge, but he was more interested in ancient records. The decision as to Hermes took place through Perrone's instrumentality, who did not understand German, and knew even Möhler's *Symbolik* only through the French translation; and at that time it was brought up against him in an amusing manner by Catholic theologians (inasmuch as his knowledge of Protestant theology was drawn in the main from Wegscheider's<sup>1</sup> *Dogmatic*, as being written in Latin), what ludicrous mistakes he had allowed to slip in as regards his German citations. In those days the Jesuit

<sup>1</sup> A nineteenth-century rationalizing theologian.



Kleutgen was the oracle in German matters at Rome. He set forth such an exposition of the rules according to which the Congregation condemns, that there was scarcely a learned book which could escape condemnation; and what theologians of the highest reputation, in particular the schoolmen, declared to be doctrines of faith, is to him the teaching of the universal Church. Naturally it is not to be required of the Pope that he should understand these books, or even have so much as read them. Highly cultured knowledge has at times been an ornament of the Papacy, but never a requisite qualification. Rather in a Catholic, and even a Christian, sense were Popes occasionally able to make boast that they had as little share as St. Peter in secular learning, since God has not chosen the wise in the world's estimate but the simple, that He may put the wise to shame. The Pope signs the sentence of the Congregation concerned, his decision perhaps not uninfluenced by the advice of his secretary of state with regard to political expediency. The operation of chance becomes apparent in these decrees of prohibition, in that, e.g., the innocent books of the Catholic and well-intentioned Lasaulx were condemned, but the writings of his colleague Baader<sup>1</sup>, which from a Catholic point of view well merited condemnation, remained unpunished. Even Protestant writings only through some kind of accident share the honour of this condemnation.

These circumstances are sufficiently admitted as true in Germany, and at the time of the conflict as to Hermes were even expressed in the most downright fashion. Thus a public letter to Professor Achterfeld<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Franz Xavier von Baader, a German philosophical theologian; d. 1841.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Achterfeld of Bonn, a member of the school of Hermes.



says: 'You cannot believe how I am troubled by the disgrace, which unhappy errors of this kind on the part of the highest ecclesiastical authorities bring upon the Church itself. And when we already know the soiled hands which shuffle the cards that the poor Pope is obliged then to play, and which under the table work the string that sets his hands in motion for such condemnations!' Inasmuch, however, as the Roman Congregation has not sufficiently long arms and eyes to secure all dangerous books under the sun, the president of the Congregation of the Index in a Brief of Leo XII admonished the bishops of the world that each bishop has to prohibit in the name of the Holy Father injurious books printed or circulated within his diocese, so that only those writings which require a more searching test or a decision of the highest authority should be brought before the Roman tribunal. Thus every bishop is a partner in the Congregation of the Index; even the bishop of Paderborn of former days<sup>1</sup>. This last certainly belongs to the literary supporters of the infallible rule of Rome, even where he glorifies his own martyrdom in the cause of that rule. His numerous pamphlets are cleverly written. The only one of importance in the learned way is the *Handbook of Morals*; but this was to a large extent copied, as he signifies by an oversight, from the posthumous papers of Professor Dieckhoff<sup>2</sup>.

What, however, will be the feelings of a man of learning, who has set forth with candour his Catholic convictions and vindicated them as a teacher or writer, perhaps after a long period of successful activity, in the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 46.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Dieckhoff of Rostock, who opposed the views of Rietschel (see p. 408) with regard to the Incarnation at the Hanoverian Pentecost Conference about 1842.



evening of an honourable life, if a command from Rome orders him no longer to teach in accordance with these convictions, nay, no longer to hold them, and thus by his submission to declare that he has become bankrupt in point of his learning. Years since we listened to a groan arising from such an affliction. Frohschammer<sup>1</sup>, professor of philosophy in Munich, who discovered reason even in nature, and in opposition to materialism ably defended the mind's rights of primogeniture, but does not desire that philosophy should be confined by the bonds of scholasticism, received from the Congregation of the Index the sentence of condemnation on account of his book on the origin of the human soul. He had interpreted the primaeval blessing of creation as meaning that the Creator has bestowed upon the human race as a secondary creation this power of reproducing the material as well as the spiritual element. Scholasticism, on the other hand, laid stress upon the view that God creates a soul for every act of bodily generation. This contains a support for the Catholic notion that the transmission of sin has to do only with the body, but the Fathers fluctuated between the two opinions, and in Rome perhaps they will not yet have fathomed the mystery how the immortal element which we term soul comes into existence. Upon the philosophic priest's declining to recant, while he maintained the sole right of philosophy herself to correct her incidental errors, and painted the proceedings of the Congregation of the Index in not very attractive colours, these writings also were condemned as claiming an unbridled liberty,

<sup>1</sup> He was put on the Index for various works, including his treatise on *The Origin of the Soul*, in which he supported the theory of generationism in opposition to the Catholic doctrine of creationism.



incompatible with the Church's authority, and the archbishop of Munich was commissioned to bring back the misguided son to his afflicted Father. The archbishop, however, was only able to rescue the students of theology from the philosopher and from philosophy, inasmuch as the former was under the protection of a prince, at whom the censure directed against the philosopher was perhaps aimed at the same time, and who attained undying celebrity by his words: 'I desire to have peace, and so do my people.'

Justice in the modern State is able to secure the civil status of the learned Catholic who has thus become involved in a dispute with what is in Rome termed learning; but in case of his desiring from conviction or motives of piety to remain a Catholic, his efficiency will nevertheless, as a rule, be crushed, even where his conscience is not wounded. This grievous fate has been shown us very forcibly in the case of Canon Baltzer<sup>1</sup>, in Breslau, who for more than a generation as professor of dogmatics has been a centre of Catholic teaching in Silesia, and a loyal adviser to the former prince-bishop Diepenbrock. He belonged formerly to the most esteemed disciples of the philosophy of Hermes, and submitted obediently to the Pope's sentence, which lacked infallibility but not ignorance. He addressed himself afterwards to Günther's system, and was reckoned as its most learned exponent. In this capacity during the winter of 1854 he was in Rome, in order to bring Günther's case before the Congregation of the Index. He brought for that purpose a commendatory letter from the cardinal

<sup>1</sup> Johann Baptista Baltzer, a German Roman Catholic theologian, noted for his opposition to the dogma of papal infallibility, which led to his suspension from his ecclesiastical office in 1870; d. 1871.



archbishop Schwarzenberg, and even towards Easter expressed himself to me as of very good heart in expecting the recognition of his master's orthodoxy, although he was not allowed to communicate the course of the trial, and not even the nature of the charge, since the proceedings require that even those who are bringing such a matter forward are bound by oath to absolute secrecy, so that all may remain veiled in obscurity. We are aware of the unexpected issue. Since Günther submitted himself, Baltzer could do nothing else than submit himself anew. But adherence to a moot point of Günther's teaching with regard to the relation between body and soul, viz. that the latter is not the sole principle of the body's life, called forth later a Brief, in which Baltzer was bidden to retract this dangerous opinion, and to yield his intelligence wholly into the obedience of Christ. As a man of peace, and one who believed in the possibility of reconciling Catholicism with humane learning, he offered to keep silence with regard to the views which he had expressed in his teaching. The Pope required him to vacate his office as teacher. His lectures were struck out of the list. Mühler's administration proved no protection to the professor.

Nevertheless, all this ecclesiastical policy, as in the previous century it was unable to prevent a revolutionary literature, so at the present time also shows itself incapable of rendering harmless a book which really menaces the Christian faith. When Strauss's<sup>1</sup> *Life of Jesus* appeared, the refutation of it was not always, it is true, well grounded, yet it was entrusted with confidence by the Church authorities to Protestant

<sup>1</sup> David Friedrich Strauss, the celebrated German theological and philosophical writer and biographer; d. 1874.



theology to be dealt with, and the learned contest only promoted our insight into the facts of Gospel history. When Renan's *Life of Jesus* appeared, there was certainly no lack of Catholic pamphlets on the other side, which, however, for the most part excited themselves to demonstrate the Godhead of the Saviour, as if that was now the question; but the real contest was transferred to the ecclesiastical authorities, and inasmuch as simple prohibitions seemed inadequate, almost every bishop felt himself called upon, through a wrathful and moving pastoral letter, to warn his flock concerning the deadly pasturage. In fact nine day devotions were appointed to deprecate the injuries which that atheistical work had inflicted upon the Divine Saviour. The result was that the pastoral letters were more efficacious than booksellers' advertisements, and the forbidden book attained a boundless circulation within Catholic countries. We must remember, however, that the prohibition exercises a temporary effect against learning, and even bare suspicion may have a disastrous influence.

Döllinger and his faithful colleague, the Benedictine abbot, Haneberg<sup>1</sup>, had invited to Munich for the closing days of September, 1863, Catholics holding a high ecclesiastical and secular position in science and literature in order to found an annual Congress for 'the union of Catholic forces in Germany, the reconciliation of differences, the softening of excessively embittered controversy, and better co-operation in learned undertakings in keeping with the times'. German and Swiss bishops were personally invited,

<sup>1</sup> Professor Daniel Bonifacius von Haneberg, professor of theology at Munich, 1841-51, afterwards abbot, became bishop of Speyer, 1872; d. 1876.



we know not on what principle of selection, but only from five of them were favourable answers received. None of these reckoned himself to be a learned man, so as to unite with such in a meeting. The bishops of Bamberg and Augsburg, however, took part in the Congress dinner, and offered their confident good wishes to the assembly as a good work and a noble seed. According to the report, which perhaps was somewhat *couleur de rose*, about one hundred men of learning, in peaceful debate for four days in the chapter-house of the Benedictine abbey under the presidency of Döllinger, held deliberation and made arrangements concerning all sorts of matters that stir men's minds at the present. The main subject dealt with was the freedom of learning in its relation to ecclesiastical authority, and the following resolution was adopted almost unanimously: 'It is a conscientious duty in all learned investigations to submit to the dogmatic decisions of the infallible authority of the Church. This submission is in no wise inconsistent with the natural and necessary freedom of learning.' The gathering was inaugurated by the archbishop of Munich with a mass of the Holy Ghost, and commenced with a recitation of the Tridentine Confession of Faith. An address to the Holy Father full of submission and attachment, was signed, and after the close those responsible for the affair were able to telegraph to Rome that the first assembly of learned Catholics in Munich had commenced with Divine service and the reciting of the Confession of Faith, that it had been brought to a close in a similar spirit, and that the controverted question that had been raised with regard to the relation of learning to the Church had been decided in the direction of subordination to ecclesiastical



authority. The same evening the answer was wired that 'his Holiness sends the assembly his blessing, has received with gratification their resolutions, and encourages them to persevere in their truly Catholic aims'.

But the post, with its halting gait, arrived later. A Brief to the archbishop of Munich commenced by showing how his Holiness had learned with grave anxiety that private persons, without any commission from the Church, had presumed, by proceedings of this kind, to intrude upon the teaching office of the Church, and how, especially in Germany, there were not wanting such men who, trusting unduly to their reason and entrapped by a deceitful philosophy of the day, hold in slight esteem those paramount teachers who are venerated by the whole Church (the Schoolmen), and in opposition to the decrees of the Holy See and its Congregations declaim and babble (*declamant ac blaterant*) that the free progress of learning is hindered by these. It is true that by means of the report of the archbishop, which was awaited with the utmost anxiety, the feelings of his Holiness were to some extent relieved. Nevertheless, adequate ground remains to call for earnest exhortation to faithful men of learning, that their submission is not to be limited to that which has been established as a decision concerning the faith by means of the infallible judgement of the Church, decrees of general Councils and of the apostolic See, but that what has been declared by those regularly charged with the office of teachers throughout the Church, as being equivalent to a Divine revelation in the way of theological truths and consequences deduced from them, is to be inviolably observed and to be taken as guide in regard to the truths which can



be perceived by the human reason. Accordingly a further decision is to follow, after the Pope has ascertained the judgement of the German bishops with reference to the opportuneness of such assemblages of men of learning.

This exhortation was equivalent to a suspicion directed against German learning in general, and in particular against the learned head of the Munich gathering. As opposed to his view that an error in theology, and so in learning, is only to be combated by means of learning, and that in accordance with human law generally it is only through errors that the way to truth lies, the wrath expressed in the Brief may well be intended against those who teach a false freedom on the part of learning, and value not simply its true progress, but also in a shameless way errors as though they constituted progress. Döllinger had opened the gathering with a well-weighed bold discourse with reference to the past and present of Catholic theology. In this he designated scholasticism as what might be termed one-eyed, possessed, i. e. of the speculative, but devoid of the historical eye, and as having fallen into the past. He found in the Reformation time a period of bloom for Catholic theology, inasmuch as the latter learned from Protestant theology and obtained from her cleansing and guidance, so that, if a large and general view be taken, and the interests of learning be adopted as a standard, the division of Christendom has proved itself to be, in the first place, a decided gain and important advance, and only in a less degree an injury. But, as he pointed out, Spain, which had partly kept at bay and partly thrust out Protestantism, betook itself again to historical and uncritical scholasticism, and at the hands of the Inquisition learning



was overthrown, not to be revived there. Even in Italy ignorance has at last come upon the clergy. The present aspect of Catholic theology there is gloomy, and suggests the churchyard. France in the seventeenth and to the middle of the eighteenth century bore the sceptre of Catholic learning in the Catholic world, and in opposition to casuistry, perverted alike on the intellectual and moral side, maintained for pure evangelical ethics their claims and their reputation in point of learning. But then the torch of learning passed over to the German people, a clear evening light, which advances to meet the bright colours of a morning which promised much. Even the two lines taken at present in Germany by Catholic theology are in themselves no evil, provided that they grant each other reciprocal freedom of movement. The opposite would be a short-sighted, suicidal commencement. For without freedom learning could as little live as a bird under a glass shade from which the air has been pumped out. But as in the Old Testament alongside the regular priesthood there was an Order of prophets, so in the Church alongside the ordinary authority there is an extraordinary one, viz. theological learning, which exercises its influence upon public opinion. To this in the end all must bow, even the heads of the Church and the highest authorities.

The quotation from Dante which concluded this discourse bears, it is true, another reference originally, being a voice from Paradise addressed to the poet, but it might be taken at Rome in a very insidious sense :

Yet who art thou who wilt sit in judgement,  
And pronounce a decision a thousand miles away,  
Whose glance extends but to a span?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Paradiso*, xix. 75 ff. (J. F. Cary's trans., 3rd ed., London, 1831.)



Already eight members of the Congress who belonged to the school of Roman scholasticism had entered a protest against this opening discourse being regarded as indicating the programme of the assembly. How the address was received in Rome is shown by an extremely angry article in the Jesuits' journal. According to it in Döllinger's discourse those only were held up to honour as leaders of Catholic learning who, as being more or less opponents of the Catholic Church, have been visited with her censure. The period of the French Church extolled was precisely that when it was dominated by Gallicanism and Jansenism. It was not the province of theology to instruct the Church, least of all that of German theology, which is as hazy as its own sky, but theology and public opinion have to bow before the supernaturally enlightened instruction of the head of the Church. The ring of this animosity is still apparent in the report of the *Mainzer Katholik*, which defends the beloved scholasticism as the Queen of theology against the highly honoured provost of the collegiate Church, finds fault with his unfair attitude towards the learning of the Romance nations, and is alarmed at the saying that theology with its effect upon public opinion is a power, before which at last even the heads of the Church have to bow. 'According to this it is not the apostolic office of teaching, it is not the infallible mouth of the Church which is to be the supreme power, and that before which everything bows. Theology, in correlation with the apostolic office of teaching in all its results, and submissive to the judgement of the heads of the Church in all that it produces, can bespeak for its pronouncements merely the consideration which ecclesiastical authority accords



to it.' This is the Catholic view. They affect to assume that the words of the distinguished theologian, who thereby comes to be most profoundly at variance with himself, and with his whole ecclesiastical status, are misunderstood; and yet they read in no other way. At any rate (they say) just when everything seems to be conspiring against the Church, when everything is being raked up in order to raise a storm against the Holy See, this opening address is a lamentable misfortune. Then certainly there came to light the inconsistency through which the provost, who regarded the age with all-embracing knowledge and was the most skilful champion of Roman Catholicism, at last came to be at variance with it, while the Benedictine abbot, Haneberg, the savant of the East, with his yielding disposition submitted himself even to the dogma of infallibility, and allowed himself to be made bishop of Speyer, while under his name directions were issued involving the condemnation of his distinguished friend. Würzburg was appointed for the next meeting of the Congress in the autumn of 1864. A committee was nominated to make preliminary arrangements. Moreover there was a promise that yet more effective measures should be taken for the independence of philosophy. A prohibition from Rome was anticipated: yet there were probably not lacking confidential intimations what an ill impression such prohibition would make in Germany. In particular also *The Catholic*, so long as Catholic learning was as yet not again comprised in the great Orders and Catholic universities, boasted a periodical meeting 'under canvas' for invigorating purposes; so far i. e. as 'obedience to Rome is the cement which connects the new schoolmen with their opponents'.



Therefore in reply to the decisions as agreed to by the German bishops, the intentions of the Holy Father were made known by the nuncio at Munich not to oppose this meeting, provided that pledges were given that neither the purity of Catholic teaching nor the authority of the bishops should be thereby endangered. Conditions in this sense were formulated, after the inclusion of which in the regulations of the meeting they should be laid before the Roman Court; conditions after the acceptance of which the Holy Father might certainly sleep in peace in view of an assembly of learned men, even though there should actually be found learned Germans to commit themselves to them.

In the face of such facts and like ones, as they have been presented to us for centuries, only now somewhat softened by the spread of civilization, it might well prove difficult to form a clear conception of the unfettered movement of Catholic learning. When the Benedictine abbot welcomed the learned assemblage in his house, these sorrowful words were heard: 'Where are those ideals gone which we carried about with us for thirty years? What is become of those expectations, which in those years gave new life to Catholic Germany, while Möhler worked among us, while Görres still taught?' Everything done by Rome in opposition to the learning of Germany has not necessarily been the issue of Catholicism, but where there at least exists the idea of unlimited power, misapplication of that power, even combined with vacillation between arrogance and timidity, rarely fails to be forthcoming, and even the latter of these is justified in view of a widely extended culture which has grown out of Roman leading-strings.



The Old Catholic movement did not directly interfere with Catholic learning, for the learned men of high reputation who are directing its course desire by no means to renounce the Catholic Church ; only they have broken its fetters. But the *Theologische Literaturblatt*, the most able organ of Catholic criticism, issued by Professor Reusch<sup>1</sup> in Bonn, after an existence of twelve years announced in 1868 that it would no longer appear, inasmuch as since 1870 the subscribers, and in the later years the contributors as well, so fell off that the paper could no longer adequately fill its issue. It was the fairness which accorded liberty of speech even to Old Catholics, and dealt in scientific fashion with Protestant books, that frightened away Catholic contributors and caused subscribers to desert.

The whole tendency of Catholicism to place learning as well as the State under ecclesiastical tutelage, to catholicize it, as the expression runs, instead of imbuing it with the moral forces of Christianity, is an anachronism. What natural development of learning would be conceivable, where despotic directions desire to prescribe for it, not merely what the truth is, but also how it is to be found and taught ? It might have been thought sincerely, as the papal allocution of March 18, 1861, asserted, that the Papacy is compatible with true civilization, and that the present Pope has always patronized the latter. In any case, with the exception of the free State, which henceforward the Papacy will probably submit to only if it has not the power to prevent it, and with the exception of unfettered learning, we are reduced to assume with Ketteler that the freedom of Catholic learning consists simply in the fact that it is bound to the Catholic

<sup>1</sup> Franz Heinrich Reusch.



teaching concerning the faith. This reminds us a little of the story about the dog which found that his freedom consisted simply in being attached to the chain. Nevertheless the Catholic general assembly at Aachen perhaps faithfully accepted the assurance which Count Brandis offered it from the presidential chair: 'Nowhere is learning more free than in the Catholic Church.' But he added 'God's law must also be the lamp of knowledge!' understanding, we may suppose, by this the Roman Index and its Congregation. The closing words of the Syllabus at any rate were more ingenuous: 'The Pope cannot and must not come to a reconciliation with progress, liberalism, and modern civilization.' Not less ingenuous were the words of a German bishop that there was no need of learned priests, but merely an annual supply of respectable and obedient performers of liturgical directions. Daumer<sup>1</sup> with his gifts and honest search for truth, tossed about between extremes throughout life, from being an opponent of Christianity became a zealous, though not too convinced Catholic, and proclaims from his garret roof: 'All mind, all poetry and philosophy, all the deeper and more intimate spiritual life of humanity will be found at last only in Catholicism, and the rest of the world be nothing more than a technical and mercantile manufacturing machine, a materialistic rattling mill, which only the driest and dreariest human souls will be capable of making their abode.' It shows the same turn for the fantastic which led Daumer in former times to derive Christianity from Moloch worship, to consider Holy Communion to be a mild form of the worship connected with human sacrifice,

<sup>1</sup> Georg Friedrich Daumer, a German poet and philosophical writer; d. 1875.



the eating of human flesh and drinking of human blood, and moreover in the rat-charmer of Hameln saw the main witness for that belief, regarding him as one of those priests who enticed children that they might be slain for such mysteries.

A genuine philosophy, which above all things has need of a free atmosphere, not in order by a cramped contemplation of the past to submit to its unchangeable law, but ever to plunge afresh into the everlasting laws of man's spirit and of nature, is not permissible in the Catholic Church, which has departed far from Hutten's<sup>1</sup> watchword: 'Truth is a great thing, and paramount over all.' It is true that she had Giordano Bruno<sup>2</sup>; but she burnt him in Rome. Descartes<sup>3</sup> also was a Catholic, and garnished his hat with figures of the saints; but his faith and superstition had a little chamber for themselves. In the capacity of philosopher he ignored the Church, and sought a free field in a Protestant country. It is no accident that the whole ancestral line of German philosophers, Jacob Böhme<sup>4</sup>, Leibnitz, Kant, Jacobi<sup>5</sup>, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, Fries<sup>6</sup>, Herbart<sup>7</sup>, Schopenhauer<sup>8</sup>, belongs to Protestantism. Moreover when we consider the results of this philosophy, it indicates in each case a summit attained by the thoughtful mind of Germany, and in-

<sup>1</sup> Ulrich von Hutten, a German humanist; d. 1523. See 1 Esdras iii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> An Italian philosopher; d. 1600.

<sup>3</sup> René Descartes, the celebrated French philosopher, founder of Cartesianism and of modern philosophy in general; d. 1650.

<sup>4</sup> A celebrated German mystic; d. 1624.

<sup>5</sup> Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi, a noted German philosopher; d. 1819.

<sup>6</sup> Jakob Friedrich Fries, a German philosophical writer, professor at Heidelberg, and later (of philosophy) at Jena; d. 1843.

<sup>7</sup> Johann Friedrich Herbart, a prominent German philosopher, the founder of a school noted especially for its work in psychology; d. 1841.

<sup>8</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer, the celebrated German philosopher, the chief expounder of pessimism; d. 1860.



dividual rays from it touched or penetrated all the relations of life and of learning, while Roman Catholicism had merely curses for everything which issued from the unfettered development of the mind.

Yes; German literature since Lessing<sup>1</sup> is essentially Protestant, although some genuine poetic voices, ringing out specially from Austria, belong as regards their birth to the Catholic Church. Birth amid definite life-surroundings, which stamp their traditions deeply upon the youthful disposition, and on the part of one possessed of nobility of soul are not broken through without pain, is a destiny and a mystery which God has reserved to Himself. But who could contemplate Goethe and Schiller otherwise than as having grown up under Protestant training? They were more fortunate than Luther in this way, that there was not first the necessity of breaking with their past and of a cleavage in their nation to lead to their recognition and efficiency. Rather the training which issued from them and the joyous pride felt in them became a powerful bond of union among our people. It has been a matter of dispute how far they were Christians, and whether the power of Christian training, though unconsciously exercised, could never fail to be perceived in them. Nevertheless, no one has ventured to doubt their Protestant character, and thus it proves itself true in this whole condition of German literature since the time of the librarian of Wolfenbüttel<sup>2</sup>, and in the progress of the nation's consciousness since that time, that the higher development and the future of our nation belongs to Protestantism.

<sup>1</sup> Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, a celebrated German dramatist and critic; d. 1781.

<sup>2</sup> A town in the duchy of Brunswick, with a noted library of 300,000 volumes and 8,000 MSS. Lessing was librarian there.



## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICS AND NATIONALITY

THE Catholic Church has from the time of the overthrow of the first Napoleon acquired special favour by making itself felt as the sole power which was capable of subduing revolution as being its antidote, while against Protestantism the objection was cast up that revolution is the natural daughter of the Reformation ; in fact, that the mother does not differ in kind from her unruly child. For if once the teaching consecrated by tradition and the principle of authority was broken through in the matter of the soul's eternal welfare, even the legitimacy of princely power inherited by the grace of God has lost its magic effect in controlling the passions of the people. As early as 1522 the nuncio of the last German Pope, who himself recognized as painfully as fruitlessly the need of a reformation in the Church, remonstrated thus with the Reichstag at Nuremberg : 'Do you princes believe at all that those sons of iniquity are aiming in any other direction than under the name of freedom to withdraw themselves from all obedience? Are you mistaken enough to think that if they despise the Pope's laws and the decrees of the Fathers, they will give heed to your laws?' Francis I<sup>1</sup>, who caused Protestants in France to be burnt, and treated for an alliance with those in Germany, was of opinion that innovation aimed at

<sup>1</sup> King of France, 1515-47.



the overthrow of the Divine as well as the human monarchy. Montesquieu judged that Catholicism was more congenial to monarchy, Protestantism to a republic.

Against the charge as well as against the hesitating recognition of it, we cannot appeal to that convention held at Erfurt in 1860, where zealous Lutherans united themselves with Catholics of like zeal against 'the contempt of justice, and the shameless and dishonourable manner in which the revolution is proceeding in Italy, and especially against a power which is older and rests upon a more indisputable right than any other in Europe'. For if the intention on the Protestant side was not, as it was misconceived in the Roman State journal, 'to prepare the way for a wholesale conversion to Catholicism of those Protestants who still retain a shred of faith, and find Christian principles only in the apostolic religion of Rome,' yet there were some few members of that small Protestant section, in which, notwithstanding all the zeal belonging to the return to Luther's doctrinal position, there is yet predominant somewhat of the sentiments owing to which 'Fritz Stolberg had not a free hand'; although by far the greater number were withheld by a pious regard for the faith of their fathers from recognizing as joined with the temporal rule of the Pope his spiritual sway as justified, or at any rate as justified in their own case.

Clearly what the more part had in their minds was that which Tzschirner<sup>1</sup>, one of the most faithful exponents of Protestantism, insisted upon in rebutting the charge, a very dangerous one at that time, of an intimate connexion with revolution, viz. that the latter

<sup>1</sup> Heinrich Gottlieb Tzschirner, a German Protestant theologian, professor and canon at Leipzig; d. 1828.



had held its blood-stained course through Catholic countries themselves, through France, Spain, Portugal, South America, Piedmont, and Naples. No doubt this holds good only with regard to the modern tragic form of revolution, and some deeds of this sort have since been seen by us as taking place even among nations on the whole Protestant; yet a Catholic country has always remained its standing theatre of action. The revolution by which Belgium severed its connexion with Holland, was induced through Catholic interests, where the cry sounded: 'Take off your wooden shoes and strike the heretics dead.' In Poland the hymn of the nation in its mourning, 'this Niobe among the nations,' was sung to the *Marseillaise*. Even Pius IX assured Polish pilgrims of the resuscitation of their country, a saying which they brought home with them as a prophecy that could only be fulfilled by a revolution. Above all the States of the Church themselves for a whole generation before they came to an end were a nest for the hatching of revolution, to which God's Vicegerent, had he not had the aid of foreign bayonets, would long before have fallen a helpless victim. Therefore the pious wish for the Princes sounded very peculiar in the mouth of the afflicted Pope: 'Might they, however, at last be convinced that the Catholic religion alone is the teacher of truth, the nourisher of all virtues, and that upon it alone depends the safety and the inviolability of the State'! The words of his nuncio Meglia sound more sincere, or at any rate more experienced: 'Nothing but revolution can help the Church.'

But here, where there is no object in delivering a party utterance, it may be openly admitted that between the Reformation and revolution there exists



a certain relationship. They both have conferred upon the masses a permanent legal position, and have insisted upon an original right on the part of mankind against a traditional authority. Pope and bishops, against whom the great protest was raised, were also authorities, yet with the essential difference that in accordance with Divine right their power existed only in spiritual matters, as being persons who were bidden not to rule after the manner of secular princes, but only by the methods of instruction and love. Even in pagan Rome the main reproach levelled at Christianity was disobedience, rebellion against the emperor, to whose hands had been committed by the gods the government of the world. Celsus<sup>1</sup> concluded his record of complaints against Christians with the words: 'Wherefore a wise government, which foresees what will come to pass, will destroy you all before it perishes itself.' In truth there lay in Christianity a decomposing power directed against the pagan State, although the martyrs with illumined glance and praying for their executioners met the wild beasts of the desert.

Luther, in his *Table Talk* concerning self-defence and the slaying of tyrants, laid stress upon the ancient German family rights, that a man was permitted to take extreme measures if he had received a deadly injury to his family honour and to his heart: 'But if a man attack me as a preacher for the Gospel's sake, I should desire to raise my eyes to heaven with folded hands, and say: "O Lord Christ, I have confessed Thee and preached Thee. If it be now the time, I commend my spirit into Thine hands," and thus I should desire to die.' When questioned as to the right of resistance

<sup>1</sup> A Platonic philosopher, who lived about the second century. His treatise against Christianity is in substance preserved in the *contra Celsum* by Origen.



to Catholic usurpation of force, he long held that it does not become a Christian to defend himself with sword and rifle, but to endure, as did his Leader Christ; and the elector, if it came to a question of force, must as a Christian set himself against the emperor just as little as the burgomaster of Wittenberg against the elector. Acting then on these principles it is a conspicuous fact that for centuries Lutherans have led peaceful lives in States not possessed of a free government, trusting to the personal presence of the supreme Ruler, Christ. To Him they prayed for good weather and for daily bread, minded too in matters of government to entrust to Him sole authority.

Nevertheless it is to be admitted that the Reformation, bound up as it was with political interests, convulsed States, overturned thrones, and also brought about States of a new character. Zwingli, a republican on the ground of the historical claims of that form of government, was of opinion concerning those in authority: 'If they be unfaithful, and travel outside the limits appointed by Christ, they may with God's approval be removed.' Knox, the Scotch reformer, repudiated Mary Stuart as an idolatrous queen, and even her tears did not move him. In France the Huguenots, who from time to time said, 'We desire to be ruled by the king, if he is willing to be controlled by the laws,' waged a terrible civil war on behalf of their faith, not so much against the feeble royal family who desired to extirpate it, as against the party of the aristocracy and hierarchy, and against the Pope's niece who furnished forth the means for the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.<sup>1</sup> In the Netherlands it was the union of Protestantism with the

<sup>1</sup> Catharine de' Medici, great niece to Clement VII, and wife to Henry son of Francis I of France, brought about this massacre (Aug. 24, 1572).



downtrodden provincial representatives of legitimacy against Spanish despotism, whereby the republic was established, and we still read upon old Dutch ducats : 'Supported by the Bible we maintain the cause of freedom.' In England it was the conflict with the sovereignty of the Stuarts, absolute and yet become contemptible, which, through the Protestant interests menaced, acquired strength to carry through a revolution, that to the present day the English people together with its aristocracy have shown no special signs of regretting. But where the authority of princes did not meet the Reformation in a hostile spirit, it brought, whether that is to be reckoned for better or worse, a large increase to the power of the State, partly in that it contributed to it the abundant wealth of the Church with her power, partly in that it broke the power of a class which, although indeed at times it had conformed to a despotic State as a servile tool, e.g., under Louis XIV, yet ever carried within it the power of withstanding the government of the State as a close corporation. Therefore Frederick the Great, loyal to his word, from which the Pope could grant him no dispensation, protected even the Jesuits in Silesia, and nevertheless was of this opinion: 'If we consider religion from the point of view of state policy, the Protestant form is the best adapted to a republic as well as to monarchy. It best accommodates itself to the spirit of freedom which forms the essence of the former, and in monarchies, inasmuch as it is dependent upon no one, it is completely submissive to the government.'

But in the next place there comes into great prominence a charge of the opposite kind, viz. that Protestantism placed the Church under the hard bondage of secular



princes, and thus reduced to servitude the last shield against arbitrary tyranny on the part of the State, viz. the religious conscience itself. Let us look at the past, at the servile principles of justice which have been excogitated to bolster up an actual state of things which was unfair. He who rules the country is paramount also over religion, the prince of the country as *primus* among bishops, or at any rate as the foremost member of the religious community, the Regent of the Church by right of birth. In this way that charge against the Church appears to be not without justification. The German reformers, with their attention directed to the main endeavour of rescuing and making free what is necessary to salvation, and little troubled about the earthly ground and basis of the new Church, had under stress of circumstances permitted princes to become a sort of urgency-bishops. It was self-contradictory, like the dogma of man's innate want of freedom. But Protestantism became conscious of this contradiction, and does not lack energy to extricate herself. Already the constitutions themselves of German countries all at least more or less clearly declare that Churches recognized as corporations have a right to manage independently their own affairs; the limitation in the case of the Prussian statute was aimed at the Catholic hierarchy.

The Catholic Church was able immediately to take over more completely that independence, inasmuch as the forms of absolute rule are simple and concise. Moreover, the clergy understood how to direct to its own ends the pious activity of women and the ambition of men, the self-sacrificing surrender of the one, and the calculating love of power of the other. Even the genuinely Christian office of benevolence has in



their hand become a means whereby to rule. That portion of the Belgian people, which did not desire to purchase the blessings of the Church with the dearly bought freedom of the State, comprehended very well what was at stake, when in 1861 the conflict as to the law dealing with charity, which desired to place all public charitable institutions in the hands of the clergy, excited the Houses of Parliament and the people. Even Napoleon III deemed it necessary to sever the bonds which held together the unions of St. Vincent de Paul, although in themselves so praiseworthy, inasmuch as through the centralization of power which they involved they were made use of for purposes which had no reference to the aid of those in distress. But in what does the freedom of the Catholic Church consist? In the liberty to train up the future clergy, severed from the national culture and from the stream of light supplied by learning, in episcopal seminaries; in the liberty of the bishops to retain these clergy in absolute subservience; in the liberty of the Pope to submit only to the existence of bishops characterized by the same subservience, and thereby to make his choice into a law for the Church; lastly in the liberty of the collective priesthood to dominate the conscience of the laity, and at times to transgress a law of the country without punishment, or at any rate with the glory of a modest martyrdom. What has been termed the liberty of the Catholic Church was the bondage of the Catholic people, and even of the most honourable and industrious class of the clergy, the parish priests. The saying of Archbishop Manning: 'Obedience towards the Church is freedom,' labours under the fault of this slight substitution of the

<sup>1</sup> Died 1660; canonized 1737.



Church for the Deity. When in the transactions which at length led to the formation of the ecclesiastical province of the upper Rhine, the German princes demanded that the parish clergy should have a share in the choice of their bishop, Pius VII refused this, alleging as his reason that it would merely feed the democratic spirit which was a hazardous one for those in authority. On the other hand, he had no hesitation in sharing the choice of bishops with Protestant princes, by promising that only a person acceptable to the ruler of the country should be chosen by the cathedral chapters. In the same negotiations the German demand that the person to be chosen should have for eight years held the cure of souls or the office of teacher, was refused, because thereby those persons would be excluded, 'who, owing to their noble birth or the affluence of their families would not have held the one or the other office.'

The forms under which liberty exists, in order to render it compatible with order and with the permanence of the historical tradition touching legal rights, are everywhere more complicated than those of despotism. If, as being the undoubted right of the Protestant Church, there is bestowed upon it of necessity a representative government mounting upwards from the congregations, culminating in the National Council, and maintaining sisterly relations with other Protestant Churches, yet in the relations obtaining with the State authority, in the indifference especially of Lutheran congregations owing to their having been long excluded from ecclesiastical self-government, and in the divisions which accompany liberty, lie difficulties which fall to the lot of a Church that belongs to the people and is free, and which are only gradually



overcome ; and even now it is designated by a party which has cause to dread the voice of the people, the Church of a mob. But the kingdom of God comes not with outward gestures<sup>1</sup>. The external position of the Church in point of law is in the view of Protestantism merely a secondary consideration. Its freedom of spirit could not be bound for any length of time, even by means of an ecclesiastical constitution lacking that quality.

If Catholic controversialists descried and noted with pleasure in the Established Church of England a specimen of servitude to the State, how Queen Elizabeth was endowed with power over the Church like a female Pope, how James I, on realizing the extent of this power, exclaimed in his gratification : ' I thus make what I choose, law and Gospel ! ' yet undoubtedly England with all its historical angularities exhibited the first type of a State at once free and under a legal system, and at the same time with her Protestant power was mistress of the ocean, while the Christian piety of her people suffered no harm thereby. If we compare the Catholic republics of South America with the permanently and essentially Protestant North, the supreme question remains where the motive power is to be found whereby a State becomes a great and powerful country, beloved by its inhabitants, while the Catholic States of the South, founded by the action of Spain and Portugal, notwithstanding all the prodigality of nature, have not yet brought about a public life that is endurable, and even in the forms of political liberty have merely found civil misery. Did not Protestantism elsewhere put a check on despotism in the age that succeeded the Reformation ; and at the same time in Catholic

<sup>1</sup> See Luke xvii. 20.



States did liberty forsooth bloom under Philip II and Louis XIV, and the State diffuse its blessings over a happy people? The truth that a State cannot exist without religion, and that a State possessed of modern culture can only exist upon the basis of the Christian religion, has been twisted by the priests' party into the assertion that the throne is only established upon the steps of the altar, viz. the altar of the sacrifice of the mass. The support which this party offered to absolute monarchy and to vengeance upon liberalism has demonstrated itself to be weak, nay, ruinous for both Church and State. Lamennais, in one of his gloomiest parables, depicts how seven kings in dismay on the subject of their authority meet, and strengthened by a draught of blood take an oath that they will do away with Christianity, for that it has brought back liberty upon earth; but then they adopt the more sagacious counsel as follows: 'The priests of Christ must be gained over with riches, with honour, and worldly power. And they will enjoin upon the people as in the name of Christ to submit to us in everything that we do and order. And the people will believe them and will obey for conscience' sake, and our power will stand more secure than before time.' In Portugal these priests upheld the tyranny of Dom Miguel<sup>1</sup>, in Spain the legitimacy of Don Carlos. Both of these, however, fell before feeble opponents. And what has the result been to the noble people and land of Spain owing to the coalition between Catholicism and despotism, of which the most definite expression and organ was the Inquisition? In France the Bourbons after their restoration bought that support with exten-

<sup>1</sup> Maria Evaristo Miguel, third son of John VI of Portugal, was head of the absolutist party; d. 1866.



sive concessions, in reliance upon which Charles X<sup>1</sup>, after his consecration at Rheims with the rediscovered sacred oil from heaven, and having thus received a supernatural right to rule, put forth ordinances owing to which he and his house lost the throne. The French clergy, however, then resolved to pray: 'O Lord, save King Philip<sup>2</sup>!' Afterwards they prayed for the republic, and subsequently they led the peasants to the voting urn for the second Empire. After the disastrous conflict the State under cheerless circumstances in the face of the overthrow of three ruling families by means of revolutions betook itself for safety to a provisional republic, and came near to being plunged, owing to clerical enticements, into an interminable civil war (in 1877), out of which was intended to emerge that monarchy, which at the most had the power and the will to involve the French nation in an unnatural conflict with Italy, in order to re-establish the temporal sovereignty of the Pope for the benefit of the Jesuits. The people's delegates sufficed for the setting aside of clerical follies and the bringing back of the State to its peaceful development. One of the most forcible of these delegates addressed the peasants thus: 'It is said that we invented the phantom of clericalism. Have you not seen the pulpits turned into political platforms? I have never attacked religion and its servants, if they confined themselves to their purely moral and sentimental province. But I have warred and will continue to war against the men who, by means of disorder and perversion of the conscience make what is a matter of comfort and of neighbourly charity into

<sup>1</sup> King of France, 1824-30.

<sup>2</sup> Louis Philippe, king of the French, 1830-48, son of Philippe Égalité, Duc d'Orléans.



a tool for domination and oppression.' Once more the clergy pray for the republic, and God knows for whom they will yet pray, and in reference to whom Veuillot puts forth the remark: 'The State has 400,000 soldiers, the Church of France 40,000 priests. It is only by the union of the two that revolution can be mastered.' The government of Austria by its Concordat in 1855 did away with a constitutional arrangement of almost a century's standing, which kept the State independent of the Church. The government intended, by means of this rod which it made ready for itself, to hold together the countries which the sceptre of Habsburg united, and in Germany as the Catholic power to draw everything Catholic to itself. Its experience, however, in Italy was that this rod is no method of producing concord; it was forced out of Germany, so far as this was feasible. Its Concordat was vexatious to the educated section of the people in its own country and in all German countries. Owing to the same document rejuvenated Austria forthwith brought about a schism, and cast it from her as she contemplated the infallible Pope. The laws which the State made with the approval of the people's representatives and compatible with that object, Pius IX declared to be accursed, horrible, and permanently lacking in validity; but in consideration of gentleness in the enforcing of them and the arising of other interests he bore them with complacency, and counselled submission. For the Catholic Church itself the result of that compact, with the reaction which accompanies every occasion on which a nation is set free, is the endangering of its hoarded possessions. This might have been endured; but nothing disheartened the Church so much, although she still held possession of men's bodies, perhaps in due time to be



buried, as that the free daughter of heaven, religion, was dragged down into the clouds of dust belonging to political party warfare.

The Pope, Pius IX, was indeed scarcely to be blamed, if he prayed for the re-establishment of the power of ancient Austria over Italy and the restoration of her legitimate princes. He was formerly edified, on the occasion of the funeral rites of O'Connell<sup>1</sup>, in learning from Ventura's eloquent lips that the Catholic Church and political freedom are in mutual accord, nay, that the Church of the present day is reproached with giving its blessing to democracy. He once aimed at being a liberal Pope: he was served out for it. Nevertheless on the day on which Victor Emanuel by his premature death fulfilled his declaration: 'Here we are, and here we will remain,' and the whole sorrowing nation bore the first King of Italy to the Pantheon, perhaps Pius IX once more, even were it merely through personal sympathy with the excommunicated king, felt himself an Italian of olden time. The falling back of the Papacy into the policy of oppression was merely a logical conversion, although deriving the great abruptness of its character in the case of this Pope from his individual fortunes. It must be admitted that the mediaeval Popes more than once effectually defended the just rights of nations, but since they lost, at least in Italy, their true power, viz. that exercised over hearts, they joined hands with reaction in opposition to all that every educated people desires, and in the long run cannot dispense with.

Gregory XVI, in his pastoral letter of 1832,

<sup>1</sup> Daniel O'Connell, the Irish agitator and orator; died at Genoa, 1847.



expressed clearly and publicly the principles of the modern Papacy as against the demands of nations. There he exhorts the prelates of Christendom collectively absolutely to cling to the Canon law. 'For since the Church is enlightened by the Holy Spirit, it is really absurd to urge upon her renovation and regeneration, as though she could be liable to defect or dulness.' There he exhorts to the conflict with indifference, and as such he designates the idea that salvation can be found apart from communion with the See of St. Peter. 'From this unclean spring of indifference there flows that idea, or rather that madness, that every one is to be accorded liberty of conscience. This destructive illusion is the result of that profitless freedom of ideas, which extends its ravages in all directions to the ruin of the State and of the Church, while some have the shamelessness to say that some benefit results from it for religion. Is it not rather the death of soul, the liberty of error? Hence comes the destruction of souls, the seduction of youth, contempt for law. For it is a familiar fact in the experience of all nations that the most flourishing States have come to ruin through this one evil, through the immoderate freedom of ideas, through the licence accorded to public utterance, through the inordinate desire for novelties. To this also appertains what cannot be sufficiently reprobated, the freedom of the press, which some venture to demand.' Against this bogey of the freedom of the press even the example of the Apostle Paul is adduced, who burned the books of magic at Ephesus<sup>1</sup>.

Proceeding along this path Pius IX, by means of his Encyclical of December 8, 1864, and the Syllabus

<sup>1</sup> See Acts xix. 19.



attached to it, set forth assertions which involve a breach with the just sentiment of all cultured peoples and with the judicial organization developed in every State, whatever might be the name of its form of government. He demands that schools and learning, even philosophy, should be subject to his Church, that all matters connected with betrothal and marriage should be removed from secular jurisdiction, that Catholicism be the religion of the State to the exclusion of every other form of worship, demanding also compulsory powers as regards individual members of the Church. Alongside of this as against a nation's claim to direct its affairs independently, he maintained the right of intervention, as a political matter, in the interests if not of the Church, at any rate of the States of the Church. The rejection of all freedom of worship, of conscience, and of thought, closes with the frank confession that the Pope cannot reconcile himself to progress and modern civilization. No doubt there is there meant what in the Vatican is looked upon as false civilization. Nevertheless, it is the sort which secures freedom of conscience, and renders to the State that which is her due. Pius IX was artless enough to think that his Syllabus would snatch human society from the precipice towards which it was advancing. He had been talked into believing this, and afterwards it was maintained on his authority. Thus we read in the *historico-political Leaves*, 'The chief Shepherd in opposition to the creeping advance of ruin has cried: "Let there be light." The Syllabus is an epoch in the history of the times, and a turning-point leading to a period of the world with yet unforeseen developments.' In the pastoral letter of the old archbishop of Freiburg



at the Feast of St. Peter we read: 'The Popes since the time of the Apostle Peter are the peculiar creators of culture, and it is only the Papacy which is in a position to save the nations in the presence of the modern barbarism that threatens them.'

Of such moment does this Syllabus threaten to be for the Catholic Church, inasmuch as it is an official declaration addressed to all believers, and thus, according to the new dogma, infallible and valid for all future time. It is true that the Papacy has no longer the power to carry such demands into effect. But, since it lays upon all its priests the duty of seeking to carry them out, and rests itself on a basis where political passions are blended with religious ones, it menaces the State with continual illegalities which are only justified according to the tenet that in every conflict ecclesiastical law—in other words, the will of the Pope—takes precedence of the civil law. The beginnings of this were seen even before the declaration of infallibility; in Baden on the subject of schools, in Austria in opposition to the laws of 1868 concerning schools, marriage, and such legal matters without distinction of creed. The advocate of Bishop Rudiger of Linz, who acted in accordance with instructions from Rome, declared in court that 'A Catholic is bound by his very nature to be continually at variance with the laws of the State'. On the other hand, in the Parliament at Vienna, which decided upon those laws in harmony with the most decided wishes of the people, the following was put on record as their undoubted right: 'We hold it to be impossible that the State could waive its rights in reference to the exercise of judicial authority and to legislation in matters of education at the pleasure of an altogether independent



power, or absolve itself from carrying out in its fullest extent that right which is the most natural of all political rights, viz. that which consists in the equality of all citizens in the eye of the law, without regard to the creed to which they belong.'

The two great powers of our time, if not of all times, which make for security, are religion and liberty. Catholicism has guaranteed the former a position, although, owing to the misconception of her infallibility, clogged with errors and abuses. The second she excludes from the highest sphere belonging to the thoughtful mind. Accordingly if, in consequence of the fact that she subjugates minds to their utmost depth, she appears to be favourable to civil despotism, nevertheless undeniable facts of the most opposite complexion, both in teaching and practice, by no means permit this reproach to be brought without qualification against the Catholic Church. We have ourselves heard Lamennais, Ventura, Lacordaire, Rosmini, Montalembert, all these proclaiming for a time under the Pope's blessing, and not without their influence upon him, the union of Catholicism with the liberty of the nations. But their quarrel with the modern Papacy has become distinctly prominent, and varies only in degree. Montalembert confessed that he trembled to contemplate a form of belief, which pays no attention to justice and truth, humanity and honour. He made his appeal to the Catholic assembly at Mechlin: 'Give good heed to this, Catholics. If ye desire freedom for yourselves, ye must desire it for all men and under every sky. If ye demand it only for yourselves, it will never be accorded you. Grant it where ye are masters, so that it may be granted to you where ye are servants.' A year afterwards



the Syllabus appeared. Since then he must have cherished in his heart that bitter sorrow which found its first expression in the letter from his deathbed. But the Pope, who refused him funeral obsequies on the Capitol, gave as his judgement of him: 'Montalembert was a very good Catholic, but his pride was the undoing of him.' The whole of the great party which desired both Catholicism and political liberty felt something of this pain. Nevertheless, when Lamennais saw his aim of reconciling the Catholic Church with the free State overthrown by means of the pastoral letter of Gregory XVI, he was able to appeal to Gregory VII as the hero of popular liberty, who not only deposed princes and absolved their subjects from the oath of fealty—a thing which his successors would perhaps do still, if they had the power—but was actually of the opinion that princes had come into existence at the instigation of the devil, in order that from motives of blind greed and insufferable presumption they might aim at holding sway over those who were men like themselves<sup>1</sup>. After Gregory quite a succession of Popes set subjects free from the oath of fidelity to disobedient princes, and by virtue of the doctrine of Boniface VIII, that every creature on pain of losing salvation must obey the Vicegerent of Christ, they all, down to Leo X, declared their sovereign right to depose princes. Pius IX in a happy hour surrendered this, and justified his former attitude towards the question on the ground of the conditions of the time; and he was of opinion that none of his predecessors had ever overstepped his rights.

What those who know nothing of history deem to be a discovery of Rousseau, viz. the theory of the

<sup>1</sup> *Epp.* VII. 21. [H.]



sovereignty of the people and of contracts made by the community, is in reality a fairly ancient Catholic view of things. In its harshest and most sanguinary aspect as a controversial question, whether it is justifiable to slay a tyrannicide, it was dealt with as early as the Council of Constance. That sacred assembly perceived itself withheld, owing to political and personal reasons, from pronouncing, at least upon cases definitely put before them, a judgement of condemnation. The mendicant friars, and afterwards the Jesuits, considering the question whether every one was justified in putting to the sword whoever shirked the ordinary operation of the law—the question being generally framed with reference to the right of revolution—were accustomed to adduce authorities on either side; the discussion as a rule closing with the decision that it was probably justifiable. Mediaeval fancies as to sun and moon were, subsequent to the Reformation, transformed into the judicial theory that God gave St. Peter and his successors the direct government of the Church, to princes government in secular matters, but indirectly through the people. Undoubtedly, writes Bellarmine, authority is also appointed by God, but God has not entrusted it to a definite person, i. e. He has not appointed a definite form of government, but its source is the will of the people, which therefore, if just ground exists, can alter a monarchy into an aristocracy or democracy, or the converse. Its distinguishing feature, as compared with the modern doctrine of the sovereignty of the people, lies only in this, that the Catholic theory was invented not for the liberation of the people, but for the glorification of the hierarchy. The Jesuit Mariana, in his popular handbook, has brought up almost all questions arising in modern



politics concerning collisions between the rights of people and king, and has decided them to the disadvantage of the latter. The people can submit supreme authority to one or to more. If all kings were dead, the people can at their pleasure make new kings. They can depose a king on account of tyranny or other neglect of his duties, and take back his mandate. They are always within their rights in changing the form of government, only that by virtue of Divine right they are limited in this one respect, viz. that they must not permit an heretical king, inasmuch as they would thereby bring down the curse of God upon them<sup>1</sup>. Herein too is to be found the explanation of the possibility that such a handbook of politics could be used for Spanish princes. It pointed to the animosity felt against the two kings of France who were regarded as heretical. Henry III<sup>2</sup> and Henry IV<sup>3</sup> in accordance with this theory met their deaths at the hand of the assassin. In the chief college of the Jesuits at Paris, Henry IV, the formerly Huguenot king, was represented as dragged by devils into hell, while Ravaillac is borne by angels into heaven.

We do not turn such acts or theories into a reproach against Catholicism. It is no dogma, but, according to their customary phrase, merely a 'pious opinion' conveyed to us by a venerable tradition. But it is plain to be seen that this Catholicism is a dubious insurance against the terrors of revolution.

He who without prejudice regards the whole series of changes recorded in history, will arrive at the conclusion that the Christian religion as such, even in its

<sup>1</sup> So Bellarmine, l. c. V. 7. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> King of France 1574-89, assassinated by the monk Jacques Clément.

<sup>3</sup> King of France 1589-1610, assassinated by the Roman Catholic fanatic Ravaillac.



two main ecclesiastical forms, is compatible with, and might be abused in, every form of government, but also that in every one of these it has exercised a conservative and cheering power. If Catholicism in its inmost essence has a sympathy for the status of subjects and for blind obedience, if its principle of religious intolerance, which finds no justification in a free State—for this, according to the clerical view, accords to the devil and to God Himself equal civil rights—logically forces it into the arms of any kind of despotic government, nevertheless, even if we leave out of consideration the Catholic individuals and peoples, in whom patriotic sentiment and the powerful inspiration of their generation preponderate, it is able, in the absence of any disturbing cause, to accommodate itself to the political freedom of a nation, and still more easily to the ordinary forms of that freedom; although it derives but little pleasure from a public life conducted on constitutional principles. The Pope looks for kings, and finds nations. His nuncio looks for the father confessor; he finds a responsible ministry. But although the clerical party ten years ago were still complaining that the cause of the Church was as good as unrepresented in the German diets, inasmuch as the elections were in the hands of the wealthy and cultured classes, they have since that time on this side of the Alps learnt their lesson well, and will soon learn it still better in Italy, by their influence upon the masses to send representatives of their own way of thinking, a goodly number of them, to the legislative assemblies. An expression used by this party is: ‘Political forms are tools in our hands.’ In Belgium at the time of the insurrection the clerical and the liberal party adopted as a token of union two hands



intertwined. After the victory the priests demanded their share in the freedom that had been won, which to their thinking meant a free Church in a free State; among other things liberty to import Jesuits into the country, and to establish schools of every kind in order to train up a generation who should resemble them. In Switzerland the democratic mountainous cantons were the welcome abode of Jesuits. A many-headed, ignorant sovereign with his women, whatever be his masculine capabilities, is readily subjected to the priests by means of the confessional.

We as outsiders have already experienced how, for the purpose of controlling the elections, the Catholic party joined with the social democrats themselves, a combination of holy water and petroleum, unmindful of the fact that the Commune at Paris put to death the priests whom they had imprisoned along with their archbishop<sup>1</sup>. The priest can easily give a genuine Christian care for the poor, the particular application of interesting himself in the poor workman, the disinherited son of manufacture, like the bishop of Mainz<sup>2</sup>, to whom Lassalle<sup>3</sup>, the sprightly and learned prophet of Socialism, could turn with a confidence which had nothing to do with the needs of the people. A second unspoken watchword of that party is: 'Religion has the right to avail itself of everything, of freedom itself, in order to rule.' For so dear to nations has the name of freedom become that even those who have a most rooted enmity towards it advocate it. It is a well-known reminiscence from the time of the Vatican Council, how Pius IX on one occasion launched forth into invectives against the

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Von Ketteler.

<sup>3</sup> Ferdinand Lassalle, a German Socialist and agitator; d. 1864.



bishops' opposition, in an assembly of German and Hungarian prelates, and von Ketteler wrathfully observed how twenty years before they were on the high road to win over the whole German people by liberal measures, but owing to this old dunce they consented to conform to his illiberal ways, 'and these are the thanks we are now getting for it.'

It is quite after the manner of this party, by means of an exaggerated form of popular freedom, to outstrip its true friends. Thus in Belgium they promised universal suffrage, a larger measure of independence for the communities, and the abolition of capital punishment. 'The red cap of liberty is bidden to replace provisionally the three-cornered hat of the priest.' When the Protestant king objected that neither the needs of the country nor public opinion furnished an occasion for altering the electoral law, that party by non-attendance rendered the chambers incompetent to legislate. In this way government was brought to a stand, and the dissolution of the chamber rendered necessary. Catholic though the nation was, in the contest involved in the new election of 1874 the priests' party was not victorious. Certainly it needs not to fear universal suffrage, deemed as that is, even within monarchical States, to be the crowning feature of political liberty. For it has the power, through the confessional and, under modern conditions, through associations of a combined secular and ecclesiastical character with their manifold ramifications, to win over great bodies of the people in furtherance of its aims. The peasantry themselves, however, made up their minds to place their savings, upon which otherwise they keep a most careful guard, in investments which, as enjoying the favour of the



priests, promise a Christianizing or catholicizing of the capital; and the bitterness of losing this has been borne as the decree of Providence. In a population of mixed religion it may become hazardous to the Protestant section of the people, and to the State itself, if the clergy lead their crowds to the voting urn, and, according to Veuillot, the election contests become religious wars, although no longer attended by bloodshed.

The Roman Church as such has almost always misconceived, and as far as possible done away with, the rights of patriotism and of nationality. This does not exclusively constitute the State, although the latter springs from it in the main. The priest who is of the genuinely Roman type is obliged to address himself to giving whatever people he belongs to a bent in the direction of exclusively Roman interests. Every bishop, every priest, who, according to the laws of his country, has to take the oath of allegiance, stipulates for the exception, either expressed for the sake of conscience or as a mental reservation, that this shall apply so far as his duty to the Church permits. And this duty is not in furtherance of the kingdom of God as Christ founded it, or in furtherance of the eternal interests of religion. The duty referred to is for the furtherance of the Papacy, of all the rights and wrongs which the Pope's code of laws contains. Many indeed of these, the execution of which has become impossible under the conditions of modern culture and for the State of the present day, are even in the schools considered as done away with, without a distinct abolition of them having ever legally taken place. It is the duty of the priest to be answerable for all demands which are put forth from



the Vatican, and which at times have been of a very worldly character. The government of every State, be it Protestant or Catholic, must expect in the case of any sort of disagreement with the Papacy, whether with regard to elementary schools, to the free pursuit of learning, to mixed marriages, or in general with regard to equality of rights in the different Churches, such as the modern State can no longer refuse, to find the clergy among its opponents. Many of them perhaps would have wished it to be otherwise, but they are helplessly dependent upon their bishop, another upon the Pope, another perchance upon the Jesuits. Great plans or fancies have recently gone forth from this atmosphere redolent of the incense,—a world-union, as a bond of connexion between the nobility and clergy, its central office in the Vatican, which, by virtue of the combination of all the forces of intelligence, of money, and of popular piety, shall set up anew the temporal dominion of the Holy See, and, with the destruction of the modern State, attain to universal sway.

If this Church exercises a certain charm, and that not merely by means of her Sacraments, yet Protestants, and in another fashion the State, possess the word which has power to break the charm. That word is liberty, that is to say, the liberty that is truly moral, elevating nations, delivering men's minds from the bonds of superstition, a liberty which recognizes in the State as in the Church equality of privileges as Divine ordinances which are intended to be mutually helpful and to guard against its overstepping due limits. By means of the Reformation liberty acting within the law acquired a religious consecration. Protestantism, through the spiritual freedom which is a



rooted principle in its character, looks with favour upon civil freedom as well, and, according to its nature, has a heart for free national development. Precisely for that reason it is a security against revolutions, the necessity of which, as shown in history, means nothing but the last despairing method adopted by a nation to attain its rights. If the Huguenots with their chivalrous nobility and their industrious and trusty commoners had not been trodden down by France, the spirit which lived in them and the important civil rights guaranteed to them must, as far as man can see, have exercised a gradual influence upon the State as a whole, so that there would have been no need of the bloodstained baptism of 1793, in order to beget a really free France. The bard of *Paradise Lost*, that noble Protestant republican, laid down a doctrine with regard to the State similar to that of Mariana<sup>1</sup>, viz. that it is by God's ordinance that the State exists, while the choice of the kind of form which it shall assume is given into the hands of men. But Milton was penetrated by the moral dignity and the independent rights of the State; the Jesuit doctrine did not desire to elevate nations but to depress the authority of princes, in order to exhibit the secular power in its necessary subjection to the spiritual Church, and that at least in the direction favoured by the latter. The German Reformation, inspired doubtless by religious feeling as to eternal salvation, nevertheless in its other aspect arose as a protest against the domination, the extortion, and the demoralization of Rome. Ulrich von Hutten was the champion in this conflict. His misfortune and his culpability, which he shared with hundreds of

<sup>1</sup> See p. 504.



genuinely Roman priests of his time, are not of a kind to detract from the fame owed him by his country. Luther too in his powerful writings, addressed to the Christian nobility of the German people, appealed to these national powers in support of the Reformation, although their special *raison d'être* did not consist in such action.

But above all this reproach has been brought up against Protestantism, that to it is due the cleavage and feebleness of the German nation, formerly one of the most powerful in the world. The bishop of Mainz in 1855, at the eleventh centenary of his predecessor, the Apostle of the Germans, put forth this pastoral letter: 'When the spiritual bond was ruptured by means of which St. Boniface had welded the German peoples together, it was all over with German unity and the greatness of the German people. As the Jewish people lost their vocation upon earth when they crucified the Messiah, so the German people lost their high vocation on behalf of God's kingdom when they severed that unity in faith which St. Boniface had established. Since then Germany has scarcely done more than contribute in increasing measure to the destruction of the kingdom of Christ upon earth and to evoking a pagan view of the world. Since then the ancient loyalty has more and more disappeared along with the ancient faith, and no locks and bars, no penitentiaries, no arrangements for control and policing can be to us a substitute for conscience. Since then German hearts and German thoughts are always parting further asunder, and we are perhaps even now in the grasp of a development which is preparing the way for the disappearance of the German nation as a united people, and introducing a



wall between us, as firm as that which already separates us from other people of the German stock. Moreover, since then even the branches which remained upon the old stem suffer. It is simply an infatuation. People reproach the Catholic Church with so many sins on the part of her members, with so many mournful phenomena even in Catholic countries, without considering that these are in a great measure the results of that unfortunate separation. The nobler the member is, the more staggering is the effect upon the body, if it begins to withhold its service. The higher the vocation of the German people was for the development of Christian order in the world, the more fundamentally and permanently must this whole order of the world have been staggered, when that member refused its service, and the longer must be the period to elapse before a new branch can replace that which has fallen off and the vocation be fulfilled which the German people has repudiated.'

The hypochondriac unfairness with which a German prelate, reputed to be the highly gifted general of the hierarchy, on the occasion of his festival greeting, threw in the face of the German people the disgrace of unscrupulousness, of the murder of the Messiah, and of the failure in their vocation, was adequately reprovcd in his own time by Bunsen in his *Signs of the Time*, and the subsequent history of our nation has made it yet more palpable.

To the charge which desires to make Protestantism responsible for the misdeeds of the Catholic Church, the reforms which it called forth at Trent are the reply. The truth of this we have recognized. The ill success of the Catholic Church came about through thrusting out from herself the spirit of Protestantism.



The price which our people paid for the Reformation we know only too well. Alexander, the papal legate, wrote to his people at home by way of comfort that at the Diet of Worms he had not succeeded in bringing Luther to the scaffold, but only in obtaining a decree of proscription against him: 'If we have done nothing signal at the Diet, yet it is certain that by means of this edict we are erecting in Germany huge shambles, where Germans in internecine and furious combat are choked in their own blood.' This was in a shocking manner fulfilled by the 'Thirty Years' War of devastation, when restored Catholicism and the house of Habsburg once again embraced the hope of treading Protestants under foot. If the latter had consisted only of that system of dogmas which at first had been her seal, and not also in the Christian work of freeing the mind, in the promise of her whole future development, one might have doubted whether the price was not put at too high a figure. Nevertheless the division of the Churches has been often made use of by the enemies of Germany, external and internal, and, if our Catholic brethren do not decide upon an absolute and sincere regard for the freedom of conscience, be it in co-operation with or in spite of their Church, the same division will often yet be made use of, to deepen and to embitter our political differences. Nevertheless in the last German war the most gloomy speeches found circulation among mixed populations, e.g. in the Baden Oberland, that if Austria could only secure a victory, the Catholics would fall upon their Protestant fellow citizens, and beginning at Berlin, if that be captured, the citadel of Protestantism, will put an end to that religion in German countries. During the first months of the



Franco-German War the Catholic population of Alsace was in feverish hopes that as soon as the foreign Prussians were overthrown, they would then also be able to crush the Protestant Prussians among themselves, and evangelical pastors were mentioned there who did not go to bed without a hatchet. But the roots of division in the German Empire, and at the same time of its political feebleness on the occasion of every powerful national movement, lie in earlier centuries, and the Roman Church itself has its full share in them. It was in the castle yard at Canossa that the majesty of the emperor was trampled in the dust. It was Roman excommunications to which the heroic race of Hohenstaufen at length gave way. In this long war between Empire and Papacy the German princes, by means of a series of revolts and extorted compacts, attained that independence which caused the imperial monarchy, and with it the unity of the empire, to be already reduced to ruin in the days when reformation was as yet sought in vain. Accordingly, apart from internal failings in the German Reformation, which we are far from refusing to admit; its separation into two sister Churches, estranged from one another; its early dogmatic stiffness—it was the entanglement of the imperial house in non-German interests, the rule of the Habsburgs in Spain, Italy, and over races whose Protestantism was wrested from them by Jesuits and ‘salvation bringers’, which was the cause that the Reformation halted in its victorious career, and that Protestantism did not become the national religion of the Germans as it did in the German North.

When imperial Germany again stood in the royal palace at Versailles, and, after a short disclaimer in



view of the impossibility of a double-headed imperial eagle, concentrated in itself the whole might of the German people, then those whose sentiments were primarily of a Roman Catholic order and in the next place German felt that a Protestant empire was only permissible on condition of the emperor's leading his victorious host to Italy, in order to replace the Pope in his temporal sovereignty, and recover for the Lord His rights.

In Prussia the romantic leanings of Frederick William IV favoured all the mediaeval element in Catholicism. His two last ministers of public worship considered 'Catholic' and 'conservative' to be convertible terms. A strictly Catholic family in the persons of some gifted members exercised decided influence, and a Catholic section in the ministerial department of public worship represented not the State, but the Catholic hierarchy against the State. Thus it came to pass that numerous monasteries and congregations of similar character did not merely spring out of the ground and take elementary schools in hand, but Jesuits likewise actually preached proselytizing sermons in the midst of dense Protestant populations. The future clergy had received their training in the German College at Rome, or, if in German seminaries, then after the Roman method, and in the country on the frontier of Poland which was annexed to Germany both the German and the Protestant element was repressed.

When the imperial chancellor returned from France with the glory derived from his having justified his confidence in victory and from having reunited German territory to the empire, he found to be forthcoming in the local as in the imperial Parliament a compact Catholic party, like 'a mobilization' in opposition to



the State. This, chosen to a large extent with ecclesiastical ceremonial, and even increased at the next election, had control of a quarter of the votes, to which much of the element hostile to the empire attached itself. In the direction of the new public arrangements there presented itself the necessity of securing the independence of the State against the attacks of a hierarchy, which now, governed as it was by the will of a foreigner regarded as infallible, could consider the question how 'to make the Hohenzollerns innocuous'.

The Catholic section in the department of public worship was dissolved in 1871. The rights of the State over the schools were recognized by the Diet in 1872, especially as to giving instructions to the school inspectors in accordance with the judgement of the government. An imperial enactment in 1872 banished from the German Empire settlements of Jesuits and of Orders akin to them. After a change, constitutionally resolved on, in the fundamental law of the State, emphasizing, alongside of the independence of each recognized Church in matters of ordering and government, its position as subject to State laws and to legal supervision on the part of the State, on the motion of Falk, minister of public worship, the so-called 'May laws' were in 1873 accepted by the Diet: (1) The acquisition of a spiritual office is conditional upon a leaving examination passed at a German gymnasium on a three years' course of theological study at a German State University, and on a test of knowledge on the part of the State. (2) Every bestowal of ecclesiastical office is to be signified to the lord lieutenant of the province, who can within thirty days raise an objection. (3) Every office involving the



cure of souls is to be filled up within a year; in the case of those unconditionally removable (*succursales*) this is only to be done with the consent of the minister of public worship. (4) Church discipline is only permissible inside the religious body concerned and without the publicity of a civil announcement of pains and penalties. Ecclesiastical discipline in the case of church officials is only to be exercised by German ecclesiastical authorities. The infliction of fines and of imprisonment is definitely limited. Dismissal is to be in accordance with a fixed procedure, and not on account of acts which are legally of a civil nature. (5) The establishment of a royal court of justice for ecclesiastical affairs, endowed with the independence and obligations of the Prussian judiciary, with the right to decide appeals in the case of all offences charged against church authorities, including the revision of sentences delivered by lord lieutenants, and with full powers on the motion of the State authority to dismiss from office by means of a judicial sentence church officials who so seriously violate legal ordinances in their office that their continuance in office appears incompatible with public order.

While the proceedings with regard to these laws were still in progress the Prussian bishops declared that they were forbidden by their oaths and their consciences to co-operate with these uncatholic, unjust, and impious regulations, and, as though automatically, there resulted the ignoring of these laws on the part of nearly the whole of the Prussian clergy. Consequently in the two next years further laws were passed as follows: (1) Permission to appoint to vacant parishes by facilitating election through the congregation. (2) Cessation of the payments hitherto made



out of public funds to the Catholic Church. (3) The exclusion of all monastic fraternities from Prussian territory (with an allowance of six months' grace), with the exception of those whose lives were spent solely in the care of the sick. Those whose object was education, owing to the impossibility of replacing them immediately, were accorded a longer period of grace, its length to be determined by the department. (4) Representatives of the congregation are to be chosen by election, especially for the administration of church property. It was only this last regulation which the bishops, in pursuance of their proviso as to the guarding of their rights, put into operation by means of an election on the part of the community, but in accordance with their choice, in order not to allow the whole management of church property to come into the hands of the State authorities.

The May laws and what followed them remained a dead letter. The Pope too declared them null and void, inasmuch as they trampled with impious violence upon the freedom of the Church, and were antagonistic to its Divine institution. The bishops were judicially sentenced to fines and imprisonment. Six of them were one by one deprived by the ecclesiastical court, so that, two others having died, by the end of 1887 there remained in office as recognized only four Prussian bishops. Their sees could neither be filled by fresh election nor have their business carried on by the legal administrators, since no qualified person would bind himself to the new laws. All that the commissaries appointed by the State could do was to compel purely outside action in the matter of conservation of church property. So far as the dispossessed bishops did not carry on the government of their



dioceses from abroad, this was done by private episcopal administrators nominated by the Pope, whom the civil government sought in vain to reach. The clerical seminaries, in all cases where they did not submit to State supervision, were closed. The clergy nominated by the bishops but not submitted to the lord lieutenant for approval, were refused recognition by the civil authority. If, nevertheless, they discharged ecclesiastical functions, they were punished; and against such as remained in the neighbourhood in order that they might carry out their office on every opportunity, the government, contrary to the principle of freedom of choice in place of residence, obtained from the Reichstag an exceptional law, which empowered them to appoint for such priests a definite place of abode, or to banish them from imperial territory.

Thus after a few years the position was that hundreds of parishes were vacant, and their congregations without public worship and spiritual consolation. It resulted, if a neighbouring priest chanced to bring a dying man in such a parish the sacraments, that he was removed in custody of the police and judicially punished. The carrying out of penal laws, these desolate churches, the priests in prison or vagrant, corpses lying a week without burial—this state of things could not but seem to Catholics like a persecution of their Church, and in the imagination of the people this has always been equivalent to enmity directed against God. Young chaplains, with nothing to lose and much to win, the so-called pugnacious curates, with a certain recollection of ecclesiastical history, ranked the persecution of their Church alongside of that of the Christians under Nero and



Diocletian, and so far as it had its origin in a State which was as regards its nucleus Protestant, it has commenced, they said, by seeking to exterminate Catholicism, and the Church has fallen among thieves. Supposing that some congregations or some members of such readily dispensed with public worship, this was a result that was least desired by the Prussian government. Its intention was through the strict enforcement of the laws to re-establish order. They had not, however, reckoned carefully with the ability of Catholicism to withstand them, seeing that the Church is in most cases at its strongest if it is persecuted, or even merely thinks itself persecuted. The Old Catholics themselves, unsupported as they were by the favour of any government, would probably have been much more influential and widespread in Germany, if the Church with the infallible Head had not represented itself at the same time as a persecuted one.

Owing to the proceedings in reference to the aforesaid laws as well as complaints or petitions on the part of congregations and societies injured by them, the Diet was ever a fresh battle-ground on the subject of the justice of these laws. They were impeached by eloquent and acute speakers belonging to the party of the Centre as being grievously unjust to a loyal people, numbering nine millions. If the fact was pointed out to them that in other States where Catholicism was predominant, their Church without hesitation yielded obedience to similar laws—that the Prince-bishop of Breslau in the Austrian part of his diocese notifies without hesitation to the government the nomination of clergy, while in the Prussian division he refuses this notification for conscience' sake—the accustomed answer was that by compact, or in most cases by a friendly



understanding between Church and State, similar relations were agreed to, or at any rate winked at, but never in cases where the liberty of the Church is menaced by despotic legislation.

The prevailing popular sentiment among Catholic communities and beyond the frontiers of Prussia is a gloomy resentment against the State's application of force to the persecution of their Church, and so of their God. It is not a new cleavage in the German Empire. It is in a very different way that the Catholic population is excited by this conflict. Nevertheless it is a tragic circumstance that destroys tranquillity of mind in the case of many pious, conscientious men, and even in the glorious advance made by our people there appeared with destructive force the phantom of the old ecclesiastical conflict.

In late years, however, it has become undeniable that on both sides in the spiritual fight there has come to be a longing for reconciliation. The chancellor with the iron will, taking advantage of another occasion, expressed the opinion that in public life there are to be found disputes which can only be adjusted by compromise, i.e. by agreement on both sides, and, in reference to the May laws, that although he was in agreement with them in principle, he yet differed in some details. The leaders of the Catholic party hinted at a revision of the May laws. It was merely the obstinacy of the deprived Bishop of Paderborn who cried from his comfortable Chapel of the Martyrs: 'No revision, but repeal!' Moreover, the honourable minister of public worship said to the Diet: 'The May laws are not to be discussed. Every one must obey the law. It is not the laws which have occasioned the mischief, but the persons who refuse to obey them.'



But it is Roman Catholicism itself that refuses this. The individual priest can now only at the expense of his ecclesiastical future accept a post in the Church on the grant of the State. If he does so, he allows himself, smitten as he is at once with the bolt of excommunication, to be thrust upon an unwilling congregation. This conflict has been termed a 'culture-war' only with partial correctness, for there is no question of peril accruing to 'culture', even if Catholicism should prove obstinate; but it is a war between the modern State and the Church with its Canon law, and almost, as in the time of the Hohenstauffen family, contains again the personal character of a war between the imperial and the papal power. Its rumblings will still perhaps be heard for a long time; only the destructive impetuosity of the outbreak at all events must some time come to an end; and some contributions towards a good issue may perhaps be made by an examination of a fixed principle containing justice and equity in this matter.

The State consists of a nation established in a regular and orderly manner upon its territorial possessions with the object of carrying out everything which a nation as such has to do. Those objects may be very diverse, according to the position and degree of culture of the nation. It may be to throw up dikes against river or sea, like the overseer of dikes in former days, or the guardianship and promotion of the highest educational aims, like the German chancellor. A State cannot exist for any length of time without religious principles. Where therefore these are not ready to its hand from time immemorial, it is obliged to make a religion, which will then be a political instrument, like the Roman *sacra* in the hands of the



patricians. Thus, only that at times the religions of the ancient world showed more wealth of adornment, there came about national religions. Christ founded His religion with such impressiveness as a ruling power in men's hearts that it could not but break through the limitations of the Judaism from which it sprang, and St. Paul declared its exaltation above the most profound distinctions of nation, of rank, and of sex, when he wrote: 'There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither bond nor free, there can be no male and female: for ye all are one man in Christ Jesus.'<sup>1</sup> This was an exaltation as compared with the ancient State which demanded the sacrifice of the whole man, and was bounded by narrow ecclesiastical interests, even though they were co-extensive with the dominion of Rome. It was an exaltation for the human race, combined with the recognition of the fact that in man there is and must be something which can attain full satisfaction in no earthly country.

Since St. Paul's day three centuries of martyrdoms so firmly fixed the independence of the Church in the face of the State, which only discharged the office of executioner towards her, that, even after Christianity in the person of Constantine mounted the throne of the Roman Empire, and forthwith the manifold relations between political and religious authority made their appearance, nevertheless the deeply rooted consciousness of that independence held its ground, and, attaching itself to the expression, fraught with significance for the future: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's,'<sup>2</sup> soon adopted as its stamp the formula that God has divided all power between the imperial and

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 28.<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxii. 21.



the ecclesiastical authorities. This in the West of mediaeval days was taken to mean the Papacy and the Romano-German Empire. If those conflicts for supremacy have weighed heavily upon nations, yet the diversity between State and Church with their mutual limitations has meant the development of all the wealth of European culture.

The Middle Ages saw in the relation of the sun to the moon, as a part of the unchangeable order of nature, a type of the relation of the Church to the State, the latter shining only with a borrowed light. As to an elevated disposition the ideal and eternal are of higher value than transient earthly pleasure, so too the vehicle and dispenser of this eternal element appeared to be higher than the State, until the State by a somewhat niggardly allotment was assigned men's bodies only, while the Church was given their souls. But the autonomy of the State was set forth in France even before the Revolution by Cardinal Richelieu<sup>1</sup> as well as by Louis XIV, and subsequently in Germany by savants like Pufendorf<sup>2</sup> in accordance with the conception, and in every age loyal hearts regard the State as their country, on behalf of which to live and to die is, if not sweet, at any rate a lofty duty. Napoleon I on one occasion indignantly exclaimed: 'These priests! they desire the souls for themselves, and to leave me only the bodies.'

The modern State, conscious that it behoves her to carry out all which the State as such needs, recognizes the title of the Catholic Church as a moral force with ancient historical prerogatives extending

<sup>1</sup> Armand Jean du Plessis, cardinal and duc de Richelieu, the celebrated French statesman; d. 1642.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Samuel von Pufendorf, a celebrated jurist, publicist and historian; d. 1694.



over a domain common to the two, wherein State and Church meet. Accordingly it has concluded treaties with the Pope, which, when concluded with Catholic governments, received, according to ancient custom, the title Concordats. But Napoleon I perceived it to be necessary to subjoin to his Concordat of 1801 articles essential for the preservation of the special rights of the State, which Rome was not desirous of recognizing. Bavaria, as the most Catholic State within the German Empire, considered it necessary to append without delay to the Concordat of 1817 an edict as to religion, for the safeguarding of the State and of its non-catholic citizens. When at length the convention with regard to the other South German States was concluded with the Roman Curia for the creation of the ecclesiastical province of the upper Rhine, the princes concerned reserved by special edicts what seemed to be required by their rights as sovereigns, by the national peculiarities of the Church of their country, and by the claims to equality of treatment on the part of their Protestant subjects. No Pope recognized these political supplements. On the contrary the bishops were admonished that in the face of such laws involving the ruin of souls they should obey God rather than men; but these laws have been validly enacted, and the Papacy has submitted to them. Accordingly it came to be discerned that at least in the case of States developed as to culture, and containing a population of mixed character in religious faith, the time for Concordats is past, and there was a serious element in the jesting speech, 'No Concordat is the best Concordat.'

In order to give the Catholic Church its full due, the expediency might also be considered of taking counsel as to the relations of the Church to the State,



not with a foreign ruler but with the bishops of the country, not merely with the Prussian ones but the bishops of the German Empire assembled in a national council. But these bishops with few exceptions, considering the mode of their appointment, their earlier line of conduct, and their recognition of an infallible ruler over them, are merely the agents of the Holy Father, by means of whom his voice sounds with more certainty than through a telephone. In that case the German Empire would merely have discovered a many-headed Pope speaking the German tongue.

Emancipated Italy gladly laid hold upon the watchword given it by Cavour: 'The free Church in a free State.' Before him Richelieu employed these words, when they had in point of fact the converse sense: a Church without freedom in a State without freedom. The genuine watchword of Italy, however, was not 'the free Church and the free State' as implying full equality of rights. The latter held fast by its claim to the bestowal of the royal sanction (the *exequatur*) upon the prelates named by the Pope as a condition of their enjoyment of the temporalities. This, however, was merely a claim to respectful recognition on the part of the King of Italy rather than of the nature of a petition addressed to him. On monastic affairs, which however belong to the Church as well, the State has laid a grasp which may be described as severe, and far-sighted politicians perceive that Italy will not long remain at peace, if an ignorant clergy grow up, controlled by bishops that have quarrelled with the State, and have been appointed by a Vicegerent of God, who is thus more irresponsible than any sort of sovereign.

Accordingly on this side of the Alps Austria began



in the place of Concordats to circumscribe the Catholic Church of the country by means of laws of the State. In Baden and Würtemberg they held it to be necessary, considering the extremely mixed character of the population, after unspeakable trouble to conclude conventions with Rome. Those conventions were torn up by the delegates of the people, and the relation to the Churches of the country was determined by equitable laws (1860), to which the Vatican, though it grumbled, submitted. In Saxony, the kingdom as well as the grand dukedom, this took place as early as 1823 and 1827 with all friendliness. We should add that there the question concerned a diminishing number of Catholic inhabitants.

This is the history of the enactment in German countries of that which is involved in the conception of a State, that it should determine its relationship to the Churches recognized by the State by means of compacts and popular laws. After other laws passed in the earlier times of the German Empire, the Peace of Westphalia formed a State compact of this kind with regard to the relations between the Catholic and Protestant Church. When once Christianity has organized itself into distinct Churches, the State can only maintain peace among them in its capacity of lawgiver and judge, particularly where the Catholic Church has by no means the ready desire for equality of rights with the other Church. The Pope therefore has always protested against that general peace, while afterwards, however, Catholics had sometimes occasion to appeal to it. It would be as despotic as it would be a revolutionary attack upon a traditional right of a thousand years, if a State authority, whether of the monarchical or democratic kind, were to impose new



laws, and that in the case of a Church recognized as a corporation, merely because they are desirable and convenient for the State, although the result to the Church, which is thereby injuriously affected, and to each of her members in their opposition to it, is, in the opinion of Christians, only a martyrdom permitted by Providence, that martyrdom, however, consisting of many stages. The important point is that the law of the State, although passed by the delegates of the people, among whom many believers, and also perhaps many unbelievers, are included, do not overstep the limits of what the State finds necessary for its own freedom of action, and that it never make a destructive attack upon that which is in the strict sense religious. For the vote of the ambassador of Saxony at the Diet of Speyer, the scene of the famous Protest which we have to thank for the honourable title we bear, is permanently valid: 'In matters of conscience, there is no majority.' The Roman Church is indeed much disposed to make out of all ancient decisions and external matters an affair of faith and conscience in which God is to be obeyed rather than man. Here is presented a contentious area where there is need of wisdom and gentleness on the part of the lawgiver, in order at once to safeguard the rights of the State with due respect to the stage of culture that it has reached, and to treat as far as possible with indulgence the idiosyncrasies of individual Churches, and even harmless peculiarities of view; somewhat as England permits the simple affirmation of the Quaker to be equivalent to an oath, and in Germany, at least in former days, only peaceful duties in connexion with war were claimed from the Mennonites<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> A Christian denomination which originated in Friesland in the early



If we regard from this point of view the Prussian enactments and laws, there are some of them which might have been much desired by the congregations and the clergy. I refer to the administration of their own church property, in the taking over of which the congregations have at present shown apathy and coyness. The right of choosing their clergy is one of which no congregation has as yet availed itself. They are not used to such liberty. They would also have difficulty in finding a compliant and suitable person. Moreover, a favour is not readily accepted at the hands of one who is deemed hostile. But as in many parts of Switzerland this power has long been exercised as a valued right, and in upper Italy some congregations have appealed to the protection of the government on behalf of the man of their choice against intruded clergy, so the desire may at some time come to German congregations too, to have a will of their own in carrying out a Christian object. For the moment the government probably only sought by this law to show that it is not their fault, if the congregations complain of being without a clergyman.

The dissolution of all monastic communities is a harsh measure, but natural in the heat of the conflict, and in view of the excessive number of these congregations which in the last few years had utterly run to seed. Nevertheless it was not a measure of plunder for the benefit of the State, such as has taken place in purely Catholic countries. In any case there appertains to the State, and is exercised even by Catholic States, the right to decide as to the admission of new Orders to its territory and the founding of new

part of the sixteenth century, and holds doctrines of which Menno Simons (1492-1559) was the chief exponent.



monasteries. Accordingly we may be permitted merely to express the hope that the Prussian government will deal gently with the monastic communities which are still to be found in the country and which approve themselves by their activity, and will arrange with regard to new foundations, in accordance with the guarantees offered in each case as well as in accordance with the needs of the country; for it is certainly a peculiar characteristic of the Catholic Church that individuals through inclination or destiny feel themselves called upon to find such a peaceful shelter established by the piety of previous generations. It would be a very feeble State to which a few thousand monks and nuns would cause much uneasiness.

The Jesuits, after a Pope had done away with them, inasmuch as the Church could never attain permanent peace consistently with their existence, and a Pope had restored them in deference to the almost unanimous prayer of the Christian world<sup>1</sup>, have been repeatedly banished from Catholic States, and nearly every people, so soon as they could move their arms freely, dismissed them. An Empire like the German, whose prosperity depends upon Protestants and Catholics living side by side in peace, must as far as possible keep away from the body corporate a powerful Order, which from the commencement was set upon training up and inciting the citizens of this Empire to the extermination of Protestants. The first attempt at a restoration of the German Empire in St. Paul's Church even counted it as one of the main rights of the German people to exclude the Jesuits.

The withholding of public money from the Catholic Church rests upon the principle, that it is not the duty

<sup>1</sup> See vol. i. p. 25.



of the State to provide means for opposition to itself. So far as these annual payments, especially for the bishops, rest upon a treaty, which is not yet made public, to give them as compensation for confiscated property of the church, still the attempt to starve out a foe has always something inhuman about it, and of a nature to incite a capable man, even though he be possessed of a good appetite, to resistance. Accordingly we may expect that at the first indication of peace this 'breadbasket' law will disappear.

The royal court of justice with the right to depose bishops strikes them as specially oppressive. Meanwhile transgressions on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities against the State may present themselves, and at times have happened, and at the present day they are of palpable occurrence. To meet such transgressions on the part of the bishops modern France had merely a reprimand through the municipality, which proved itself naturally quite inadequate. In the Middle Ages hostile bishops were turned out or killed. A safeguard, suitable to the modern State against the infliction of a wrong, is supplied by the independent character, so far as is possible, of the judicial authority. Even in the early Church such a procedure was not unknown. Roman bishops themselves deemed it a privilege to have their cases as defendants decided by the emperor's Council of State, referring to the appeal of St. Paul to Caesar. Moreover, it is obvious that the deprivation of a bishop by means of a court of justice for ecclesiastical matters relates only to the ecclesiastical diocese, which with the consent of the ruler of the country he possessed under legal conditions. He continues to be what the State did not make him, viz. a bishop (*in partibus infidelium*, if you like).



The gravest of the May laws, although it only takes effect in future years, is that which deals with the training of the future clergy. Although opposition on this point was more deprecated than on any other, yet that opposition has most to say for itself in the way of justification. If Christ conferred upon the Church a teaching office, the instruction of her future ministers and priests is an obvious need. In fact, their mission is to become influential teachers; it may well be, even without keeping school, the most influential. The State cannot be indifferent to the question, whether they are to be brought up estranged from their country in the interests of Rome, and in a spirit which would prompt them to maintain not a thirty years' war, but an endless one on the part of one section of the people against the State. The latter would have one hand cut off (and an iron one substituted for it would scarcely be available), if it were without this control over the education of the ecclesiastical teachers of the people. Nothing is more suitable than that it should offer them similar educational institutions to those of the youth generally, who are destined to have a share in higher education. The grammar school and the university, or State institutions of similar recognized title, are viewed as the preliminary condition of every ecclesiastical office in Germany. Of all forms of compulsion that which deals with school training is the best, even for the higher scholastic education. Instruction in the special duties of a priest may then be added by the Catholic Church in its ecclesiastical seminaries, which perhaps need nothing beyond the general and liberal supervision of the State in common with all institutions for the education of youth.

But a real examination on the part of the State



after the university course should at the most be held by the theological faculty there: otherwise the carrying out of this plan would merely involve difficulty and harshness. In Baden after the introduction of the new system, not one candidate presented himself. In Prussia the result was probably the same. They prefer to go abroad, and there are not now so many persons desirous of becoming priests, that Prussia, if it wishes the parishes to be again filled up, can venture to frighten them away. He who has passed through the upper classes of a German grammar school and has acquitted himself with honours, possesses as a rule a sufficient amount of training in the humanities to take up therewith his position as a priest. An examination after the university course, and especially in the case of theological studies, is particularly needful in order, considering the absolute liberty which exists as to study, that those who are disposed to idleness may be reminded of the serious character of the pursuit of knowledge. But this examination may without scruple be handed over to the ecclesiastical authorities, to whom, however, it will be an important matter that their future priests, if a university is still necessary, should not merely consider themselves to be there for pastime<sup>1</sup>.

Least of all worthy of scruple appeared the law relating to the notification of every appointment or deprivation of a priest that was determined upon to the lord lieutenant of the province. It is true that in peaceful times it was no difficult matter to carry out, just as similar arrangements are customary in other

<sup>1</sup> In 1886 it was decided that for the administration of a spiritual office it is no longer essential to furnish a certificate of intellectual proficiency as guaranteed by the State, and that theological study may be referred back to the ecclesiastical seminaries.



national churches. In Austria the bishops have virtually complied with the same law, and the appeal against the authority of the State within thirty days can there only be made to the minister of public worship, while in Prussia it is to an independent court of justice. The law was readily made suspicious in the eyes of the people through the saying : ' Our Lord certainly did not wait to notify the twelve Apostles to Pontius Pilate, the lord lieutenant of Judaea.' As regards the State it had no great significance. The lord lieutenant can apart from this ascertain with promptitude and certainty where a spiritual office is to be filled, and who is destined for it. When shortly after the passing of the law I expressed my doubts with regard to it to a very wary lord lieutenant, and asked him : ' Why then does the State lay stress upon this notification ? ' the answer came : ' To meet the case where rejection is needful ; for it is much easier for the government to protest against one who is merely nominated than against an ecclesiastic already appointed.'

This being admitted, it is certainly of special importance in the choice of a bishop, that the State should make use of its rights, which apart from any other consideration are of the nature of a compact in Prussia, and perhaps have not always been exercised with clear-sighted caution in forbidding the choice of any one who is not a person agreeable (*persona grata*) to the king ; but, on the other hand, in opposing the appointment of an individual clergyman the necessity will only seldom arise of considering him as dangerous to the State, and so in an isolated case of this sort it will not be difficult to exclude him even after his appointment, or to cause him to be excluded by the judicial court.



The May laws with their precursors gave the clergy the impression of an attempt to subject the Catholic Church to the modern and decidedly Protestant State. The natural consequence, as was announced by the bishops, and at once whispered from the Vatican, was a passive resistance, while people took their chance of the punishments threatened. But for individuals who were peacefully disposed there was no difficulty in transgressing with impunity isolated laws of this class. It was not an unheard-of thing to be an academic student in the theological faculties at Breslau, Bonn, Münster, Munich, Tübingen, or Würzburg. Moreover the irksome tribunal, if it had no occasion for assembling, possibly to afford relief on the appeal of a harassed clergyman, might soon become insignificant, and thus it could easily happen that people became accustomed to the new legislation as they got to experience that it did not aim at the subjugation of the Church, but at securing the State against its domination. But the unlucky law which requires the notification of every ecclesiastical appointment to the lord lieutenant, at once brought the conflict to the front everywhere. On every occasion when there was an appointment following upon a death, and whenever one was moved from place to place, the bishop, who did not and could not make the notification, came under the penalty of the law ; the person nominated by him, who felt himself bound to administer the office, became liable to punishment and forcible rejection ; fines and arrests mounted up ; bishops were deprived and churches left desolate. This controversy, which I might perhaps designate a case of Gessler's hat<sup>1</sup> over again,

<sup>1</sup> This refers to the legend that William Tell refused to salute the cap which Gessler, the Austrian governor, had put in the market-place of Altdorf for that purpose.



was rightly described by the minister of public worship with his accustomed penetration : 'The real issue of the present disorders is that the Prussian bishops have deemed it to be a violation of their duty towards the Church to notify to the State those persons whom they are designating for a clerical office.' He deduced then the conclusion that those who complained with regard to these disturbances had best address themselves to the bishops.

But if the government had foreseen the consequences of the law, they would scarcely have enacted it in this form. Now it may well become a State which is so great and triumphant, and which has not the misfortune to be infallible, publicly to recognize and recall an error, which is nothing more than this law. This can be formally done only by the act of both houses of the Prussian Diet, but even if the ministry were to do it upon their own initiative, they would not fail to obtain a declaration of indemnity in the next session. The result would be that these punishments and suspensions, merely on account of the omission to notify, would no longer take place. Moreover it would then naturally follow, although it would only be possible by the permission of His Majesty, that all punishments that had not yet been worked out and all suspensions which were merely on account of this one fault would be cancelled. It would be no recoil in the face of a clerical ascendancy, such as would be utterly unseemly for the State, but a procedure arising from the strength, which, retaining absolute freedom and without any bargaining, determines to do away with a position of serious distress and to establish the possibility of a peaceful settlement. Those who were to be replaced in their



posts would not be asked whether they were willing henceforward to obey the new laws. Individuals could not answer in the affirmative, but the State is powerful enough to presume obedience, since it only punishes where antagonism has taken an active form. There would still be no peace, least of all a permanent peace, with the Roman Church. That Church will long contend in future against freedom on the part of the State in its control exercised over life, and the other laws please it just as little, but there would arise an endurable state of things, and a peaceful temper, perhaps also a submission of the clerical party to that state of things so soon as they understand once for all that the reversal of it is hopeless<sup>1</sup>.

It were to be wished for the representative of the Prince of peace that without any formal compact he would maintain peaceful relations with the central European Empire, powerful as it is both in an intellectual and a military sense. Windthorst<sup>2</sup>, however, remarked rightly: 'The Pope is as he is; otherwise he will cease to be.' He is dependent upon his position, and in the case of a Pope who is bound to regard himself as infallible, by his infallible predecessors. Only it will depend upon his individual character, and perhaps upon his own past as well, whether he promotes a temper of peace or of irritation in German countries. It becomes, however, the German Empire and each of its States so to

<sup>1</sup> In 1887 it was decided that the bishops' duty of notifying exists only in the case of the bestowal in permanence (i. e. for life) of a spiritual office, and that the right of veto on the part of the State must be supported by a specific reason relating to the civil or political department; further that all compulsion on the part of the State in the direction of a permanent reoccupation of a spiritual office is not permissible. [H.]

<sup>2</sup> Ludwig Windthorst, a German statesman and lawyer; d. 1891.



administer the State in its public relations and so to base it upon religion that it needs not to trouble itself much as to either the blessing or the curse of God's Vicegerent.

If Catholicism planted Christianity upon German soil, made its bishops Princes of the Empire, and has been for over half a millennium almost the sole supporter of higher education, nevertheless Protestantism, in spite of its spirituality, and of its having been only semi-victorious, has become the more popular, and I might say the more autochthonous religion in Germany. Christianity, which is in fact common to both Churches of the West, carries with it in each aspect, we may almost say in each disfigurement, still in like permanence the saving woundmarks of our Lord, the signs of its origin from the East and from heaven; but for Catholicism it has become a Roman Christianity, for Protestantism, so far as mainly through the instrumentality of Luther it has succeeded in living up to its first powerful embodiment, a German Christianity, with which our people feel themselves materially, and still more spiritually identified. In Venice at the time of the contention between the Republic and Paul V, in other words, of the conflict between the waning authority of the State and the encroachments of Canon law, the expression was often heard: 'First Venetians, then Christians!' To German Catholics the choice will seldom remain open of saying, 'First Catholics, then Germans,' or the reverse. We can say with confidence: 'Germans and Protestants, both with all our hearts.'

Persons, so far as ideas are represented by them of a creative kind, or at any rate with peculiar force, appear to man's view in great measure fortuitous.



The Creator has reserved to Himself the mystery involved in the sending and development of them. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy how the peoples of the Romance section of Europe have produced so many saints in whom their Catholicity has won itself renown in a popular fashion, while the German nation is so poor in homeborn native saints. Of the founders of Christianity in German countries, who were indeed in most cases of German origin but estranged from the ancient stem and arriving from over the sea, side by side with St. Gall<sup>1</sup>, whose memorial, however, may almost be said to survive merely in the names of places, gates, and streets, Boniface alone has any real existence in the memory of our people. Not only, however, did he hew down Wuotan's sacred oak, but his Roman axe smote, so far as possible, whatever they held national and sacred. Then out of the Middle Ages alongside of Nicholas the saint of Flüe<sup>2</sup>, whose conciliatory spirit, although not yet canonized, we pray may ever rule over Switzerland, there comes the beloved popular saint, the ideal of eccentric benevolence, who was yet the daughter of a king of Hungary, and before her late canonization through the instrumentality of Montalembert was more known and honoured among Protestants, to whom her holy relics had been forfeited, than among Catholic folk<sup>3</sup>. So poor is this people in homeborn figures of ideal Catholicism that it was wont to set up as guardian of its bridges a saint half Czech, half Hussite<sup>4</sup>.

But while there are so many such saints still appearing in the calendar, or honoured in local

<sup>1</sup> An Irish saint, apostle to the Suevi and Alamanni, a pupil of St. Columbanus; d. circ. 645.

<sup>2</sup> Otherwise called 'Brother Claus', a Swiss national saint; d. 1487.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 43, 65.

<sup>4</sup> See pp. 84, 95.



churches, which of them stands out, considered simply as a popular phenomenon, on a par with Luther? It is natural that where religious animosity is wont to be most intense, pious simplicity, inculcated in Catholic schools, sees only a monster in the powerful heresiarch; but it is preposterous if such persons, desiring to possess any acquaintance with historical facts, avail themselves of some chance words of the Reformer, which, stamped with the coarse taste of the time, remind us of the peasant's son and the mendicant friar, in order to represent him as a low dissolute monk. They never once consider that it would bring but poor credit to the Roman Church if an insignificant monk, bent upon his own gratification, had succeeded in shaking its throne more seriously than, to employ the very words of its legitimate self-assertion, any king or emperor had ever yet done. Catholic theologians have compared Luther with Arius, the Reformer with the heresiarch of the fourth century. In the matter of personal qualities, which, so far as is known to us, were respectable in the case of Arius, a definite likeness cannot be demonstrated. No more was this the case in point of doctrine. The rejection by the Church of the error of Arius was the result of a great period of development prompted by him. Admitting Christ to have created the world as the Son of God, he yet maintained that He had Himself come into existence before the world, and thus was not God in the full sense of the word, while Luther bowed down before the Godhead of Christ, a believer if ever man was; but what is unconsciously true in that reference is the general fact that the German peoples embraced Christianity first in the Arian form, and maintained it long with German fidelity, after it had been put



under the ban of the Church of the Roman Empire. Thus they furnished as a matter of fact a prediction, although incomplete and not corresponding in every detail, as is the way with prophetic prefigurations of the kind, that these peoples were specially destined again in the course of their history, but in a nobler fashion and with better justification, independently to set forth their national character and the rich life of Christianity in a form rejected by the Roman Church. There was, however, a personal trait which should strongly remind us of Luther in the bishop who belongs to this Arian Christianity, and who first admitted a German nation into the Church, the highly estimable bishop of the Goths, Ulfilas<sup>1</sup>, who deemed it to be before all things necessary for the Christianity of his people that they should have access to the Holy Scripture in their own tongue. Accordingly in the Gothic Bible he has bequeathed to us the oldest monument of a German language, which in euphony far surpasses our own, a Bible to which Luther's alone is comparable, which moreover from a linguistic point of view, even more than the latter, came to be the basis of development for High German speech, and over and above the German dialects, while each branch of our people is at liberty sedulously to preserve its own, it has established an ideal unity of language in which we all understand each other, and in which all, Protestants as well as Catholics, must speak and write if they desire to be heard by the whole German people. Catholics, however, have chosen to recognize as of ecclesiastical authority only a Latin Bible belonging to the priests; we have the German Bible as the

<sup>1</sup> A Gothic bishop and translator of the Bible; died at Constantinople, 381.



title-deeds of Christianity in its German form. It is nothing but a simple historical pronouncement when Döllinger terms our Luther 'the most powerful leader of the people, the most popular character that Germany has ever possessed'. All genuine historical knowledge and education will in time recognize this, whether in joyful concurrence or in bitter hatred. Luther—he may be likened as well to a rock, rooted unfathomably deep in his native earth, his head now towering into the blue ether, now veiled by storm clouds, a rock with sharp corners and steep sides, from which rushing streams pour themselves, laying waste or fertilizing. Yet at the same time he was a plain German who, where he was not weighed down by the melancholy temperament of his youth and the pain which is the lot of great men destined to play a part in the history of the world, cheerfully took his share in everything which at that time stirred the heart of the German people, himself cherished in the hearts of our nation, whose simple piety was his great support and his comfort. On a summer's evening once he walked in anxious mood through the gate and went on to the next village. There he hears a peasant woman in the open vestibule teaching her children before going to bed to pray for Doctor Martin Luther and his good cause. He joyfully returns and calls Melanchthon to the window: 'Philip, be of good courage, the children are praying for us. The Word of God calls their prayer a power.' Moreover, every child in the Protestant portions of Germany and every peasant can describe to you his manly youth and his work until his lonely sojourn in the Wartburg, full as it is of attractive and heroic features. Where could the Catholic Church of Germany produce a popular saint like him, who was never canonized?



The German people in the course of centuries has accomplished many great deeds, and experienced great sorrows; but what deed do you consider to have sprung more from the utmost depths of our people's heart in its gravest religious aspirations, and to have been of greater efficacy in its influence upon the world, than the German Reformation? He who is capable of failing to understand this, or of only admitting it with a feeling of resentment, thereby stands aloof from at least a large part of the noblest sentiment of the German nation.



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